An Exploration Of How Policy Implementation Is Perceived To Contribute To Capacity Building Within Schools

By

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Declaration

This thesis is the candidate's own work. It has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Conference papers submitted

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Abstract

This is a study of how UK public sector organisations both build and define capacity for improvement. Public service quality in the UK remains a subject of ongoing importance, not least because of its contribution to economic growth of the country as a whole but also because of the needs and wants of the civil population as consumers of those services. It is considered that in order to improve service in a continuous and sustainable manner, organisations must develop the capacity for improvement through the process of capacity building.

The research is based in the field of Education, at school level, from which the implementation and effects of a particular capacity building policy can be examined. The policy in question is PPA time (Planning, Preparation, and Assessment time), which forms part of the government's agenda for Workforce Reform. In conducting this exploratory research, a qualitative approach to a case study based research design is adopted. An interpretive analysis of cases facilitates a richness and depth of understanding. Six detailed case studies are carried out at schools serving Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils in one Local Authority in the West Midlands. A number of research methods are employed to facilitate triangulation of the data, including semi-structured interviews, observation, a survey, and a diary study.

This thesis makes three contributions to new knowledge. Firstly, it develops understanding of the role of certain influences on internal capacity. Some are found to influence internal capacity *directly* through their impact upon internal capabilities. Others are found to influence internal capacity *indirectly* through the way in which they impact upon implementation of a capacity building policy. Influences are further found to be 'enablers', which if present would enhance internal capabilities; 'qualifiers'; without which, particular influences would 'inhibit' internal capabilities, and which had the potential to become 'enablers'; and 'inhibitors', which had detrimental effects on internal capabilities.

Secondly, it examines the relationship between direct influences and internal capacity to find that several of the influences in the extant literature are less significant in the context of a policy designed to build capacity. Further, it finds that particular influences affect other influences and so are 'higher order' influences. Thirdly, it interprets the literature and research findings to conclude that 'capacity building' is best understood as: the process of developing the necessary resources to meet improvement objectives, and of maximising the benefits of those resources through organisational capabilities.

Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Term	Definition
Contract extension	Involves writing in an additional 10 per cent to the contracted teaching hours of part time staff to ensure they receive the statutory requirement for PPA. Teachers bought in from outside the school to cover PPA are also entitled to receive PPA, and this can be obtained by extending their contracts.
Cover supervision	Occurs when no active teaching takes place. Involves the supervision of pre-set learning activities in the absence of a teacher.
DfES	Department for Education and Skills.
Effect	A number of key capacity-related themes guide this study. Research examines the 'effects' of PPA to see if they fall in line with these themes.
Enabler	Relating to case study findings; these influences enabled the capacity-related effects of PPA to arise.
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant.
Influence	A number of factors are said to be 'influences on internal capacity'. Stoll's 1999 framework categorises these as (1) things which influence individual capacity; (2) social and structural influences on school capacity; and (3) influences from the external context
Inhibitor	Relating to case study findings; these influences inhibited the capacity-related effects of PPA from arising.
IQEA project	Improving the Quality of Education for All. IQEA is a collaborative research project with over 200 schools in England, focusing on the conceptual, strategic, and methodological aspects of the school improvement process. Hopkins et al. (1994) provide details of its aims.
Key Stages	The four stages of the National Curriculum: KS1 = age 5-7; KS2 = 7-11; KS3 = 11-14; KS4 = 14-16.
LA	Local Authority (formerly Local Educational Authority but now combined Education and Social Services)
NRT	The National Remodelling Team was established by the DfES within the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) to promote the school workforce remodelling agenda by providing tailored programmes of change management and guidance for schools. Its remit was to work in partnership with Local Authorities and other bodies. Its members were later amalgamated into the TDA.
NVivo	Qualitative data analysis software package.
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development.
OfSTED	The Office for Standards in Education is the inspectorate for children and learners in England. Its remit is inspection and regulation of Local Authorities, teacher training institutions and youth work.

PANDA	OfSTED's Performance AND Assessment reports made available electronically annually to maintained schools in England. These are not in the public domain. School performance is compared with national averages and shown using contextual value added measures. In 2007 this is to be replaced by RAISEonline; a new web-based system that will also replace the DfES' Pupil Achievement Tracker (PAT).
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This is the regulatory body for public exams, and is sponsored by the DfES.
Qualifier	Relating to case study findings; these influences do not contribute to PPA's ability to bring about the capacity-related effects, but their absence would potentially inhibit capacity-related effects.
SATs	Standard Assessment Tasks. National tests/tasks set by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).
School effectiveness	A definition by Mortimore (1991) takes into account the school effectiveness argument that home background has far greater influence on a child's development than the school attended: "an effective school is one in which pupils progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake". Stoll and Fink (1999) suggest school effectiveness is "the *what* of change" and that school improvement is "the *how* of change".
School improvement	"A systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively." (as defined by the 14-country International School Improvement Project, Van Velzen et al., 1985)
School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document	The Education Act (2002) made several changes to the statutory arrangements for teachers' pay and conditions. This document (DfES, 2003c) publishes the new framework for the England and Wales pay arrangements for all maintained schools (i.e. those within the remit of an English or Welsh local education authority).
Section 133 Regulations	Refers to section 133 of the Education Act 2002. The Regulations made under this act apply in England only (HMSO, 2003). Separate Regulations for Wales are made by the National Assembly for Wales. These clarify the respective roles of qualified teachers and other staff in schools, and specify circumstances under which certain kinds of staff without qualified teacher status – usually support staff – may carry out 'specified 'work'.
SEN	Special Educational Needs.

SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator.
Special Measures	Refers to a process schools undergo following unsatisfactory inspection.
Standards	In terms of workforce remodelling 'standards' refers to teaching and learning. Teachers are allocated time to plan and prepare high quality lessons to meet the needs of all pupils. Where 'attainment' and 'achievement' are not used interchangeably, 'attainment' refers to SATs or test results; 'achievement' refers to value added.
Specified work	This can be used to deliver PPA time by support staff. Activities include (a) planning / preparing lessons (b) delivering lessons to pupils (c) assessment (d) report writing.
TA	Teaching Assistant.
TDA	The Training and Development Agency for Schools.
Theme / sub-theme	A theme is a key interpretive metaphor, concept, or topic. It is a way of categorising the qualitative data.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme.
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme.
WAMG	The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group is a partnership of organisations representing employers, the government, and school workforce unions.
Workforce Remodelling Agenda	PPA is the third part of this. The document is officially called "Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: A National Agreement" but is commonly referred to as "the national agreement", "workforce remodelling", or "workforce reform". It was signed by government, employers and school workforce unions on 15 January 2003.
Work-life balance	Workload is the major reason cited for teachers leaving the profession. Prior to PPA, over 30% of teachers' time was spent on non-teaching activities. A PricewaterhouseCoopers workload study was commissioned by government in the Spring of 2001 in the face of threats of industrial action from four teaching unions. The workforce remodelling process is designed to refocus teachers' time and energy back into teaching and learning by removing all time consuming non-teaching activities. By paying them for the work they do, and incorporating this work into the working week, the theory is that a more favourable balance between time spent on school work, and free time, is created.

1. Introduction

This chapter provides the initial rationale for the research presented in this thesis, along with the research question. It introduces 'capacity' and 'capacity building' as concepts that have obtained increasing importance in the public sector, but whose clear definition remains elusive. It further introduces the field of school improvement as being particularly relevant for this study, and ends with an outline of the thesis structure.

1.1. Overview of the field of research

This research is concerned with what could be argued to be the little understood concept of 'capacity building' within the public sector and in particular, within schooling. The concept is significant because great expectation is assigned to it, as reflected by growth in government funding for international and community-based 'capacity building' initiatives within disadvantaged countries and communities (Harrow, 2001). A review of the literature finds the term 'capacity building' ingrained in the rhetoric of all areas of the public sector, including International Development, Local Government, Health, and schooling. This is not to say that there is a common understanding of the term. The widely held view, as will be explored and demonstrated in the literature review (chapter 2), is that this is not the case. This research sets out to contribute to, and develop, the literature which defines capacity building, and the body of research relating to the concept through examination of a particular capacity building policy.

Capacity building has been shown to be a significant activity in the field of education at school level, and a vital element in school improvement (Hargreaves, 2001, Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001, Stoll, 1999). In order to study the concept of capacity building, this research takes a management approach and focuses on the implementation of a particular centrally driven management policy whose implicit goal is to build capacity. A policy fitting this criteria is found in the field of school improvement, which becomes the setting in which to research the management phenomenon that is capacity building. The study explores the extent to which the implementation of one particular workforce reform policy, within a wider programme of reform, is perceived by members of the workforce to contribute towards the building of capacity for school improvement. It is a perception study and does not directly assess the extent of improvement, or measure it in any way, for a number of reasons to do with the practicalities and value of measuring outcomes, not least of which is the notion that significant educational changes (such as workforce reform) take a number of years to monitor (Fullan, 2001a). The contribution of this study will be to assess how far the

implementation of the policy is perceived to contribute towards enhancing capacity, and by examining effects of the policy through the lens of theoretical frameworks, to explore *how* implementation of the policy brings about enhanced capacity for improvements.

A literature review will aim to inform the research by exploring current understandings of the concept of capacity building. It will allow development of research questions that enable the study to answer the question of how capacity and capacity building can be understood in the public sector. Within the public sector, the field of school improvement provides some understanding, particularly in terms of frameworks for defining, and building, capacity. Because of the particular aims of the policy example used by this study, which relate both implicitly and explicitly to building the capacity for improvement, this research is grounded in school improvement, with supervision from the Institute of Education as well as the Business School. Capacity building is the common theme in which this research is embedded, as shown:

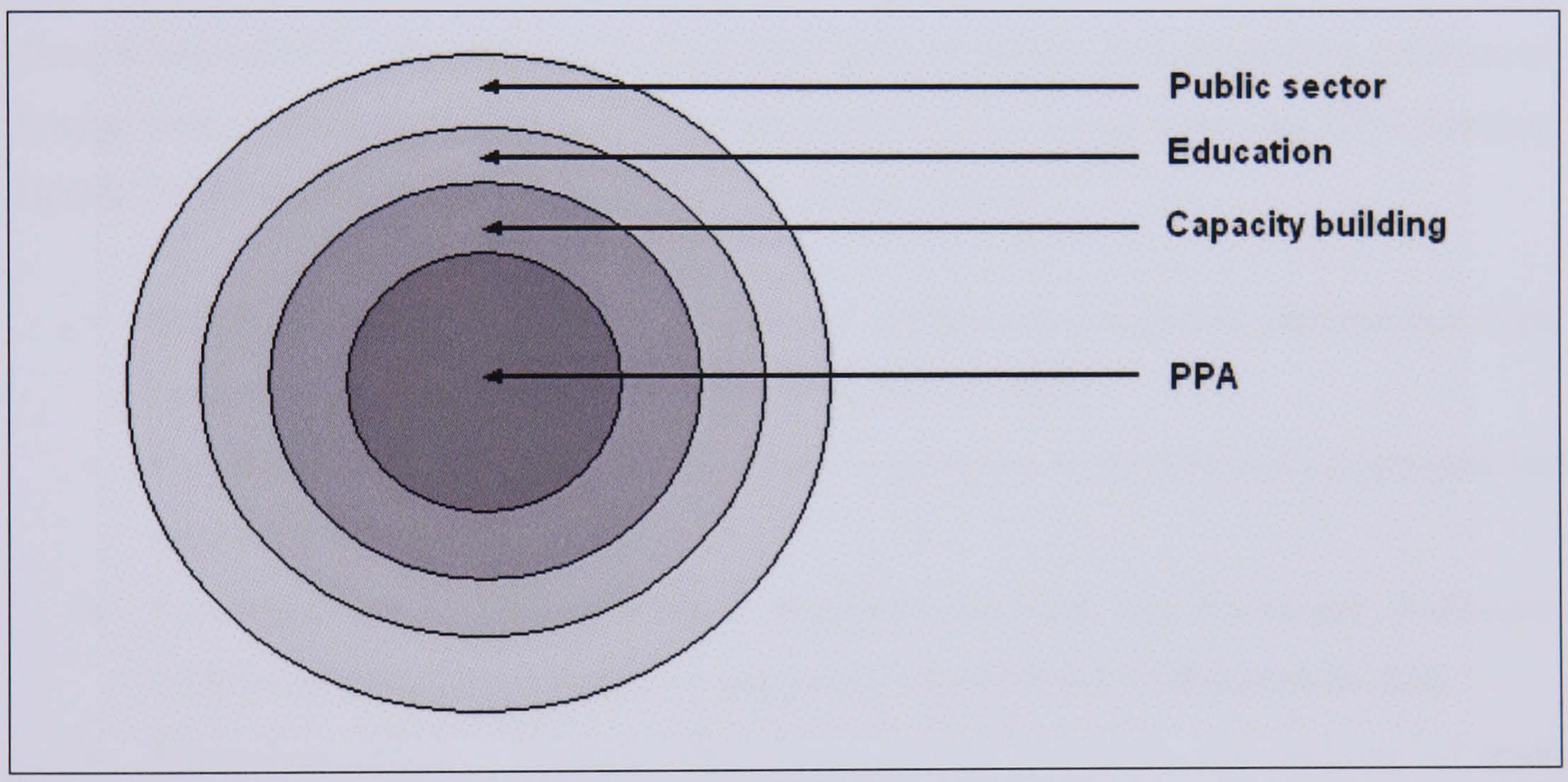

Figure 1-1 Schematic of the literature covered

1.2. Overview of the public sector in the UK

In order to situate this research in its broader context, this section briefly outlines the recent history and current situation with regard to the public sector in the UK. Public sector reform over the last twenty-five years in Britain has been described as New Public Management (NPM) by some commentators (Rashman and Radnor, 2005) and associated with the neo-liberal policies of the previous Conservative government (Hartley et al., 2002). NPM is based upon the introduction of free market assumptions, management practices, and market relationships into the public sector (Sanderson, 1998) using notions of privatisation, competition between providers, and consumer choice in order to increase cost efficiencies

(Dawson and Dargie, 1999). Since the election of the current Labour government in 1997, the focus has been upon modernisation, quality improvement, greater public-private co-operation, and tighter monitoring and evaluation of organisational performance (Boyne et al., 2001). Hartley (2005) describes three competing paradigms of governance and public management, suggesting that 'traditional' state-centred public management, and market-centred NPM have been challenged by New Labour's civil society-centred 'Third Way', which acknowledges a challenge from civil society and the citizen, or user of public services.

New Labour's modernisation programme has been far reaching (Benington, 2000:3) in that it encompasses not only central government but local government and its political arrangements and managerial processes, major policy themes (such as health, education, criminal justice, and social exclusion), as well as *"micro-level practices (like the detailed content and timing of literacy and numeracy hours [in Education], and the potential problems of queueing and scheduling for hospital beds)."*. The modernisation agenda has been selective rather than comprehensive, however, focusing on key services; those with direct relationship to the public, rather than other areas of policy such as taxation, defence, or foreign policy (Benington, 2000). This public sector reform incorporates the Civil Service, Health, Social Services, and Education, and its values include:

- Standards and accountability – a national framework to regulate performance both challenges and secures scrutiny of public sector workers;
- Devolution and deregulation – local-level innovation is allowed and encouraged for resolution of front-line issues;
- Flexibility and incentives - relationship between work and workforce challenges traditional contractual boundaries and promotes efficiency / effectiveness; and
- Expanding choice - through diversity in service provision and tackling of poor quality service (Butt and Gunter, 2005).

Quality public services are seen as important by the government because not only does the public want **improvement**, but issues such as educational standards, strong communities, and crime prevention are key components of economic success (Benington, 2000).

1.3. Overview of Education in England and Wales

This section gives a brief overview of Education in England and Wales rather than the UK as a whole, because the policy used as a vehicle from which to explore notions of capacity is applicable only to schools governed by the ministries of education for those areas. Ministries of education are the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Welsh Assembly

Government Education and Skills (WAG) in England and Wales respectively. Maintained schools, that is, those supervised by a Local Authority (LA), look to the LA for budget delegation, inspection and advisory services, admissions, and school transport issues. Every maintained school must have a governing body and follow the relevant national curriculum for the age range for which it caters. The education system in England and Wales is divided into primary, secondary, further, and higher education. Children have eleven years of compulsory full-time education between the ages of five and sixteen, during which time they must receive teaching suited to their age, ability, and any special educational needs (SEN). The LA must be satisfied that children withheld from normal schooling receive adequate provision elsewhere.

Secondary education follows primary and although in some parts of England a grammar school system operates, most secondary schools in England and Wales are comprehensive; that is to say they do not accept children based on examination results. Most children in England and Wales transfer to secondary education at the age of eleven. There is, however, a parallel three-tier system of schooling within some LAs where pupils attend a first school until Year 4, a middle school, and then go to high school in Year 9. As a result of the 1988 Education Reform Act, four Key Stages of education were established within a National Curriculum framework of teaching. Pupils are assessed at the end of the Key Stages 1-4 shown in Table 1-1. After Key Stage 4 testing, pupils choose whether to continue with further education or move into the workplace.

Key Stage	School Year	Age
Foundation Stage	Pre-school - end of Reception Year	3-5
1	Years 1-2	5-7
2	Years 3-6	7-11
3	Years 7-9	11-14
4	Years 10-11	14-16

Table 1-1 Explanation of Key Stages

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 there are a number of different types of school in England, as shown in Table 1-2, with the differences being in the services offered and/or the body who is wholly or partly responsible for their buildings and character.

Type of school	Key differences
Community schools	Funded by the government and the LA who own the land and buildings and are also the nominal employers of staff
Community	As above but catering for pupils with the specific needs for which it

Special schools	was set up
Maintained Nursery schools	As above, catering for pupils of nursery age in the foundation stage, funded by the government and the LA who are also the nominal employers of staff.
Voluntary Controlled schools	Established by a voluntary body; funded by the government and the LA who are also the nominal employers of staff. The character of the school is determined by the church or foundation, which historically is associated with the school
Voluntary Aided schools	Established by a voluntary body, usually the church; funded by the government, the LA and the foundation (usually the church or trustees). The foundation is responsible for the character of the school, part of the building costs and is the employer of staff. The foundation nominates the majority of governors and is responsible for the admissions policy
Foundation schools	Own the land and buildings and are direct employers of staff; funded by the government and the LA but with a foundation of board of trustees determining the character of the school
Foundation Special schools	As above but catering for pupils with the specific needs for which it was set up
Specialist schools	Any maintained secondary school in England may apply for specialist school status, whereby they have a special focus on chosen subjects

Table 1-2 Different types of maintained school (Worcestershire County Council, 2005)

1.4. Overview of the PPA policy

The policy chosen as a setting for this research is a centrally driven government strategy for improvement and forms part of the three-phase National Agreement on workforce reform (also known as the Workforce Remodelling Agenda), signed by the Department for Education and Skills, local employers, and the majority of school workforce unions in January 2003, and applicable to all maintained schools in England and Wales. The signatories[1] are collectively known as The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group

[1] Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), Department for Education and Skills (DfES), GMB, National Association of Headteachers (NAHT), National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST),

(WAMG). Workforce Remodelling forms a part of, and reflects the values of, the wider principles of public sector reform for Health, Social Services, the Civil Service, and Education, as discussed in 1.2.

Workforce remodelling comprises three phases (Butt and Gunter, 2005): the first (September 2003) involved teachers being freed of a specified range of non-teaching tasks, having their work/life balance examined, and being allocated leadership and management time if appropriate; the second (September 2004) created a 38 hour annual limit on cover for absent teachers by other teachers. From September 2005 the third phase was to be implemented by statutory force into all schools. Under the terms of phase 3, all teachers employed under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, must be allocated a guaranteed minimum of ten percent of their timetabled teaching time as 'PPA time', which means they must have time set aside within school hours to carry out planning, preparation, and assessment. It is considered particularly suitable because of its implications for capacity building, which are examined here, and again in section 3.2.1.

Information pertaining to the National Agreement is disseminated to practitioners through a variety of government-related websites and pamphlets to schools. In particular, in the initial phases, this was through the National Remodelling Team (NRT), the implementation arm of WAMG formed to help implement the National Agreement within schools (and since subsumed within the TDA - Training and Development Agency). Practitioner websites include TeacherNet.gov and GovernorNet.co.uk. These sources put forward the National Agreement as a package that is officially concerned with 'raising standards and tackling workload'. Government policy literature, including the National Agreement itself (DfES, 2003b), and guidance accompanying Section 133 of the Education Act (2002), suggests it is about enhancing the status and work/life balance of school staff, and about enabling teachers to focus more effectively on their teaching so that pupils are given a greater chance of success. PPA time, as one aspect of this, shares its objectives (Milliband MP, 2004). The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) write that phase 3 (PPA time) aims to *"enable teachers to raise standards through individual or collaborative professional*

Professional Association of Headteachers (PAT), Secondary Heads' Association (SHA), Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), UNISON, Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

activity. The contractual change on PPA is also designed to improve teachers' work/life balance." (TDA, 2007).

Much of the rationale behind the National Agreement is about schools **developing capacity to improve standards from within**, and this is explicit through official channels as well as implicit. At a conference on school workforce reform in 2004, a presentation by the Director of the NRT (Collarbone, 2004:6) discussed how the remodelling agenda *"releases the capacity to focus teaching and learning and raise standards"*. The implication of this aspect of the presentation is that cultural changes through the remodelling process are what 'build capacity'. This capacity is linked to an increased focus on teaching and learning, and raised standards. Guidance from the NRT stated: *"The contractual changes...should [be an] opportunity...to review the way that the school is organised in order to maximise its capacity to deliver improved standards"*. The remodelling process, it is hoped, will enable schools to develop sustainable cover strategies in order that they may *"meet the contractual requirements (including the longer-term objective) and become ever more effective"* (DfES, 2004d). Similarly, the following quotation from the National Remodelling Team demonstrates how the Remodelling agenda, of which PPA is a part, equates to a capacity building exercise:

"Through remodelling, schools can develop sustainable strategies to improve the effectiveness of the whole school workforce and help them to meet the contractual obligations of the National Agreement. By tackling workload issues, schools can create more capacity, which brings the opportunity to increase professionalism and ultimately raise standards in teaching and learning". (NRT, 2005)

These official statements are indicative of the need for schools to develop and build upon existing resources with a view to improving.

As one aspect of the National Agreement, PPA time shares the same objectives, and is about *"improving both standards of teaching and learning and the work / life balance of teachers [as] teachers have time to plan and prepare high quality lessons"* (Milliband MP, 2004).

The legislation stipulates certain conditions to which schools must adhere, but it is not prescriptive in the sense that it allows schools the autonomy to decide for themselves the process by which they are best able to implement the requirements. Guidance from the DfES (WAMG, 2004) identifies the common strategies available to schools to enable them to implement the minimum requirement. This is a two step approach; the first of which involves maximising the existing teaching resource to enable cover for teachers on PPA time

from within school; the second involves timetabling additional resources from outside the school to fulfil cover requirements.

An issue with PPA time, and the reason it is considered a particularly suitable management policy context for this research, is the resource-poor planning environment in which schools must consider and prepare for this phase of change. The notion of capacity building, particularly in situations of limited resource, is said to be a key factor in ensuring improvement under large scale reform initiatives (Harris, 2001). Without funding to simply buy in the extra help needed to cover PPA, schools have to be creative about how they implement the policy, and plan for its maintenance in the long-term. A policy where resources are constrained provides the environment in which schools must become both more efficient and effective if their plans are to be viable in the long term. Where resources are limited they must be developed. Schools have to develop resources in a sustainable manner, and to maximise the benefits of their existing resources. Clearly, one could argue that such a policy is about capacity building, whether explicit or inherent.

1.5. Overview of research aims

In brief, this research aims to develop the body of research on capacity building by examining implementation of the PPA time aspect of the statutory National Agreement to see *how* capacity is built in this instance, and thus, *how* it can be understood as a phenomenon. This research will potentially be very enlightening because of the nature of PPA time as a capacity building initiative. Its implementation can be explored from within existing capacity building frameworks, drawn particularly from the literature on school improvement, to see if new insights are forthcoming. This study has the following broad aims:

- To review the literature on capacity building
- To determine the factors affecting the effectiveness of PPA time in the context of primary schools
- To employ a set of thematic concepts relating to development of capacity in order to investigate the relationship between capacity building and context
- To design a case study that facilitates collection of qualitative data exploring perceptions of members of the workforce to be scrutinised through an interpretive perspective
- To develop an understanding of the concepts of 'capacity' and 'capacity building' in the public sector, and to explore how capacity is built

- To locate the findings of the study back into the literature and present a unique contribution to the body of knowledge on capacity building, as well as to present implications for policy and practice

By doing this it will aim to address some key theoretical research questions that can be set out broadly at this stage as:

- How is capacity built within Education?
- How can 'capacity' and 'capacity building' be understood within a broader, public sector context?

1.6. Overview of the thesis

The following diagram gives an overview of the thesis structure:

1. Introduction	➲ Demonstrates the importance and relevance of the research ➲ Puts forward the overarching research question. ➲ Lays out a thesis overview
2. Literature Review	➲ Demonstrates knowledge 'gap' ➲ Sets out research aims and objectives
3. Methodology	➲ Sets out refined research questions ➲ Explains how problem was investigated ➲ Justifies methods and techniques
4. – 9. Analysis Chapters	➲ Sets out research findings
10. Cross Case Analysis	➲ A comparative analysis of the themes arising from the six case chapters to develop understanding and explanation
11. Discussion	➲ Repositions findings into the literature to show contributions to knowledge ➲ Draws out implications for future research and policy
12. Conclusion	➲ Synthesises findings to demonstrate critical purchase and implications of the thesis ➲ Evaluates the research process

Table 1-3 Overview of the thesis

2. Relevant literature

In order to explore the extent to which, and the means by which, the PPA time policy is perceived to contribute towards enhancing capacity for improvement, and so to contribute to current understandings of capacity, this review seeks first to examine the depth of current knowledge relating to 'organisational capacity' and 'capacity building' in the public sector. It aims to provide conceptual clarity and to highlight existing frameworks and themes, bringing in relevant work from the private sector where necessary, in order to identify areas where knowledge is lacking. Emergent from this review will be evidence of the novelty and necessity of this research through identification of a gap in theoretical and empirical knowledge that this research will aim to fill. The review will conclude with a summary of the key debates that this study will develop, particularly relating to the purpose and operationalisation of capacity. These debates serve to provide a basis for discussion of empirical findings relating to respondents' understandings of capacity, which will be related back to the academic literature.

2.1. Introduction

Using existing literature to define the term 'organisational capacity' for an academic audience is problematic because the majority of public sector references are found in government policy and research literature, with comparatively few instances found in academic / theoretical writing (Harrow, 2001). The presence of the term 'capacity building' in a range of government and practitioner literatures (e.g. Maconick and Morgan, 1999, ODPM, 2003, UNDP, 1998, UNEP, 2002) reflects the prominence of capacity building as a topic for discussion in all areas of the public sector, including the international development community (e.g.Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995, Eade, 1997), Local Government and more general Public Management (e.g.ODPM, 2005, Harrow, 2001, Hou et al., 2003), the Health, and Education sectors (e.g.Paul, 1995, Hadfield et al., 2002).

An issue with the existing literature, and which this review hopes to address, is that the language relating to organisational capacity is often used inconsistently, particularly by governments and professionals (Maconick and Morgan, 1999, Cohen, 1995), and it is most often used with no explanation or conceptualisation. A resulting cross-fertilisation of ideas between government, practitioner, and academic literature (Harrow, 2001) dilutes the meaning behind the terms. Further, a lack of sound theoretical frameworks (Hadfield et al., 2002) contributes to an overall lack of clarity that makes it *"difficult for government decision-makers...and academics to share common ground when discussing...issues"* (Cohen, 1995:407). There remain gaps in the body of knowledge about organisational

capacity and how it is used to bring about positive change. For example, some of the academic literature acknowledges the lack of sound theory relating to organisational capacity that would assist in developing policy and practice (Rashman and Radnor, 2005, Honadle, 1981, Rashman et al., 2006, Cohen, 1995), and there is little in the way of empirically based writing, particularly relating to the term 'capacity building', as will be demonstrated in this review.

The majority of academic references to organisational capacity relate to an organisation's capacity to learn, or to the notion of capacity building (Rashman et al., 2006). The term 'capacity' itself creates definitional issues when one considers a distinction between notions of capacity in the technical and social worlds. Paul (1995:2) compares the two, observing that in the technical world *"the capacity of a machine can be measured...Capacity refers to the measure of a durable stock that yields a series of outputs over time in conjunction with other inputs"*. Capacity in the social world focuses instead on a -

"*bundle of human and institutional capabilities [which is] conceptually no different from that of machines...but in practice, it is difficult to measure, see and compare [as it concerns] the creation, expansion or upgrading of a stock of desired qualities...that could be continually drawn on over time"* (ibid.).

Organisational capacity in this social sense is intrinsically unsatisfactory as a concept because of its intangibility and immeasurability, a problem which this review examines in section 2.3. This chapter examines the body of knowledge on organisational capacity and capacity building to build up an understanding of the terms and to provide a working conceptualisation of capacity and capacity building for the research. It begins by examining notions of organisational capacity, particularly in relation to capacity for learning, as is the focus for much of the literature. It then narrows focus to organisational capacity in the public sector, to the conceptualisations of capacity building in the public sector and, more specifically for the focus of this research, in Education. Its purpose is to demonstrate a critical understanding of the subject area, and to lead on to development of research questions. In order to do this it will examine what confusion exists, and why, and proceed to attempt some synthesis of the existing knowledge.

2.2. Organisational capacity and learning

There is some knowledge in relation to organisational capacity in the private sector and this will be examined to assess its relevance in a public sector context. As asserted by the systematic literature review conducted by Rashman, Withers, and Hartley (2006), this literature relates particularly to capacity for inter-organisational learning, the concept of

absorptive capacity (Beeby and Booth, 2000, Child and Faulkner, 1998, Cohen and Levinthal, 1990), and the concept of organisational learning capacity (Finger and Brand, 1999). Discussion of the linkage between learning and organisational capacity, observed first in Rashman et al's (2006) review, is included here because of its relevance to the subsequent comparison of frameworks, examined in the later sections of this review.

Child and Faulkner (1998:283) suggest that a link between organisational learning and enhanced organisational capacity is an association that *"has long been recognised"* in the field of organisational strategy. Their statement *"successful strategies...enhance [organizations'] internal capacities. Adaptation to external developments and internal enhancement both involve 'organizational learning'"* (1998: ibid) suggests that organisational capacity both results from, and impacts upon, a successful learning strategy. Capacity in this context refers to *capacity to learn* of partner organisations. The authors suggest that members of an alliance will partner together in order to enhance existing performance capacities, which *"can be considerably extended by involving other network members in the capacity-constrained activity"* (Child and Faulkner, 1998:115). In this context, capacity refers to the capacity of an organisation *to perform* in a given area. Child and Faulkner (1998) suggest capacity *to learn* is dependent upon a four interrelated factors, shown in Table 2.1.

Child and Faulkner (1998) further review the literature to identify barriers that inhibit organisational learning in the context of strategic alliances. Barriers exist at cognitive / emotional level (the social identities of partner firm members, and the intention of the firm in forming the alliance) as well as organisational (strategy, control system, and human resource policy) level. It would follow that if these barriers inhibit organisational learning, they are potential barriers to organisational learning capacity.

A further capacity concept relating to organisational learning is that of 'absorptive capacity'. Although there is a substantial body of knowledge on absorptive capacity, Minbaeva et al. (2003:586) suggest there remains some confusion in the literature, which *"offers multiple methods to conceptualise and operationalise absorptive capacity"*. When first introduced by Cohen and Levinthal (1990:128) absorptive capacity was defined as *"the ability to recognise the value of new external knowledge, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends"*. Zahra and George (2002) suggest that while this is the most widely cited, it is not the only definition and there is ambiguity and diversity in definitions, components, antecedents and outcomes. Such ambiguity highlights a need for greater clarity about the domain and operationalisation of this construct (Joglekar et al., 1997, Matusik and Heeley, 2001). Building on past definitions Zahra and George (2002:186) propose a reconceptualisation of

absorptive capacity as *"a set of organisational routines and processes by which firms acquire, assimilate, transform, and exploit knowledge to produce a dynamic organisational capability"*. They see these four capabilities (acquiring, assimilating, transforming, exploiting knowledge) as four 'dimensions' of absorptive capacity that help to explain organisational outcomes. Similarly, other writers refer to the action-oriented aspects of Cohen and Levinthal's (1990) absorptive capacity definition as 'capabilities' (Van den Bosch et al., 2005), 'components' (Lane et al., 2001) or 'dimensions' (Lane and Lubatkin, 1998).

The value of this exploitation of knowledge is the resulting commercial gain or outcomes, in whatever form these take. Van den Bosch et al. (2005) suggest absorptive capacity is a transdisciplinary construct, spanning across psychology, sociology, economics, and political science. Although absorptive capacity naturally has very strong private sector connotations due to its origins in the literature relating to technological innovations, it could be argued that if the exploitation of knowledge for organisational ends is important for public sector improvement, the notion of absorptive capacity may be just as valid in public services as in private enterprise. Definitions may need to be re-focused, however to take into account the knowledge that is being absorbed and the purpose for its absorption in the public sector. For example, the focus on R&D may be less relevant to public services (Rashman et al., 2006).

In the same way that organisational learning is a complex function of individual learning (Child and Faulkner, 1998), as well as organisational factors (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2005), so absorptive capacity of an organisation depends upon the absorptive capacities of its individual members, but is not simply the sum of those capacities. Cohen and Levinthal (1990) relate absorptive capacity to sets of factors that Van den Bosch et al. (2005) term 'clusters of antecedents'. The first cluster is internal mechanisms, such as the structure of communication (both intra- and inter-organisational) and the character and distribution of expertise within the organisation. The second cluster relate to the notion that absorptive capacity is largely a function of the firm's level of prior related knowledge. This second cluster includes such factors as skills, prior learning experience, and shared language. Significant in terms of the second cluster is the notion that *"learning performance is greatest when the object of learning is related to what is already known"* (1990:131), because it means that absorptive capacity is enhanced in areas where there is some familiarity (in terms of related language and symbols) with the 'new' knowledge to be absorbed. Essentially, absorptive capacity is enhanced as the learning of new, but related, knowledge leads to the development of a set of learning skills. Experience of one learning task consequently influences and improves performance on some subsequent task (Ellis, 1965).

As highlighted by Rashman et al. (2006) the concept of absorptive capacity has also been related to employee ability and motivation by Minbaeva et al. (2003), who examined areas of human resource management (HRM) in order to expand the knowledge on how organisations enhanced creation and development of absorptive capacity. Their quantitative empirical study, involving interviews and questionnaires, yielded information on the perception of employees around the various constructs under examination. It found that specific HRM practices for enhancing employees' ability (training and appraisal) and employees' motivation (communication and compensation based on a meritocracy) led to enhanced absorptive capacity, which was coneptualised as the interaction between employees' ability and motivation (Minbaeva et al., 2003). This research indicated that the greater the absorptive capacity, the higher the level of knowledge transfer between an organisation and its subsidiaries (Minbaeva et al., 2003).

To draw this literature together, it appears that understandings of capacity in the private sector relate particularly to the capacity to learn; in much of the literature this is studied in terms of capacity to absorb new knowledge. In terms of the usefulness of the concept of absorptive capacity to the public sector, Rashman et al. (2006:24) suggest that it *"might be more appropriately applied for organizational and public value purposes rather than solely commercial purposes"* Noting the contribution of Minbaeva et al. (2003), it is still the case that until an understanding of absorptive capacity is developed that is more appropriate to a range of organisational contexts, it could be argued that current conceptualisations can contribute little to understandings of organisational capacity in the public sector. While it may be a relatively simple step to re-word definitions, most of the research relates to R&D and the need to remain competitive in the face of external technological developments because that is where firms typically develop absorptive capacity (Joglekar et al., 1997). This is less relevant to public services. In terms of this current research, this literature on absorptive capacity will serve to contribute to an understanding of capacity building by outlining some of the capabilities that are required for the building of capacity.

2.3. Relating (learning) capacity to performance

As this review has highlighted, a number of authors relate capacity to organisational learning, discussing the organisation's capacity *to learn* (e.g. Child and Faulkner, 1998). In contrast to the measurement of technical capacity, the measurement of organisational capacity poses problems when related to that 'softer' side of organisations; aspects related to human resources, and their contribution to the organisation's capacity to learn. Three issues can be identified in linking capacity to performance, and which make capacity a contentious and unsatisfactory term. These will be addressed in this section. Firstly, whether or not such

a relationship between capacity and performance can be asserted. Ongoing debate in the literature raises issues about the relationship between organisational learning and organisational performance (Inkpen and Crossman, 1995, Preskill and Torres, 1999). Huysman (1999) suggests that much of the organisational learning literature (particularly in relation to the learning curve theory and the 'Learning Organization') tends to perceive learning as a positive outcome rather than a process and her review of the literature finds that learning does not always lead to improvement. Indeed, a range of evidence, including literature reviews and empirical studies suggest learning does not always produce 'good' outcomes (Rashman et al., 2006). For example, *"learning does not always lead to intelligent behaviour"* (Levitt and March, 1988:335) due to factors at both individual cognitive and experiential, and organisational structural, levels. Huber suggests (1991:89) *"entities can incorrectly learn, and they can correctly learn that which is incorrect"*. Rashman et al. (2006) find there has been *"little recent exploration of the topic and little empirical evidence that supports the relationship between organisational learning and performance"*.

Just as the relationship between learning and performance creates problems for those wishing to measure performance outcomes, and just as there is no agreement across the literature about how to measure absorptive capacity, or how absorptive capacities relate to firm capacities (Van den Bosch et al., 2005), so it could be argued that performance outcomes resulting from changes in learning capacity would be equally problematic to measure. The second issue in relating learning capacity to performance is whether such a relationship could be measured empirically, for even where learning outcomes, and arguably capacity outcomes, are said to be 'good', they may be impractical to quantify or even identify. For example, in their conceptual paper on learning in joint ventures, Inkpen and Crossman (1995) suggest that the time delay between learning and performance events, and the masking of learning benefits by intervening forces, makes empirical study problematic. Further, performance enhancements may be attributable (whether in whole or in part) to other factors, such *"efforts of imitation, regeneration, or technological development"* (Inkpen and Crossman, 1995:603).

In areas of public service management, evaluation of government programmes and policies is necessary in order to gauge such things as efficiency of implementation and effectiveness of outcomes (Pollitt, 2003). Measures such as financial efficiency are problematic in these noncommercial organisations, however, *"where monetary measurement of output is usually meaningless or impossible"* (Simon, 1994:37). There are further motivational and methodological problems in the evaluation of policy outcomes, an area that has generated its own body of literature. For example, Pollitt (2003) raises a number of issues pertinent to the current study, including:

- The importance of *contexts*: specific context affects effectiveness of a policy implementation. Identification of key contextual 'success factors' is critical to understanding the role of context;
- *Timing* problems: proper measurement of outcomes can take years. The need for short term turnaround of evaluations can lead researchers to evaluate efficiency and responsiveness at the expense of effectiveness;
- What *kind of evidence* to look at: discipline and theoretical background tends to influence the evidence a researcher will look for, and which stakeholders they will involve in the process. Which are the most relevant and reliable sources?

Similarly, Boyne (2003, 2004) suggests the notion of 'public service performance' is inherently political and contestable because it is judged by multiple constituencies with varying evaluative criteria. Stoll (1999:505) adds to this debate the idea that choice of learning outcomes one might measure rather depend upon one's definition of education in a changing world, *"and there is no common agreement on this issue."*. More significantly in terms of measuring outcomes, just as the issue of 'other factors' come into play in linking learning to performance (Inkpen and Crossman, 1995), so the issue of 'attribution' is a fundamental problem in evaluations relating to organisation change (Davis and Martin, 2002, Pollitt, 2003:119), so that *"even if a 'result' was found, it was often very difficult indeed to be sure what had caused it"*.

While attribution and measurement problems mean it should not, therefore, be the task of this study to evaluate a set of performance related outcomes, some writers in the public sector have argued that improvement is related to capacity in terms of public service policy implementation (Jas and Skelcher, 2005, Sanderson, 2001, Sanderson, 1998, Martin, 1999). This suggests that it is acceptable to talk about a particular policy in terms of capacity for improvement, even where it is not appropriate or possible that such an improvement be measured.

Exploring organisational performance in the public sector through empirical investigation, for example, Jas and Skelcher (2005) conceptualise capacity as a variable that describes the extent to which political and managerial technologies exist in the organisation and are oriented to realising goals set by leadership. Capacity is seen to be a function of the managerial and political technologies for the implementation of a change. They argue that poorly performing organisations are those that are constrained by either cognition (awareness and understanding of the organisation's current performance trajectory), capability (construction and institutionalisation of a change-oriented narrative), or capacity. Sustained poor performance is said to result from gaps in any of these three areas. A weakness in Jas

and Skelcher's (2005) work is that they do not explain how they came to define capacity in the way that they do. No reference is made to why 'political' and 'managerial' technologies, and not other factors, constitute capacity. Their definition also suggests capacity to effect change is down to management alone. No reference to actors at other levels is made. In terms of this review, their key contribution, however, is to identify another type of capacity besides the capacity to learn, which is the capacity *to effect change.* So although this review has highlighted the ongoing debate about the association between learning and performance, it may be that performance, or improvement, can be discussed in relation to the capacity to effect change.

In summary, there is some debate about the relationship between organisational learning, and by extension, organisational learning capacity, and performance. Although writers in the field of public sector research have made links between capacity and improvement, this review finds that measurement of improvement outcomes is highly contentious. For example, in this study it would not make methodological sense to attempt to measure improvements arising from capacity developed by policy implementation. First, outcome measures, such as raised standards or reduced staff turnover, would have to be determined and justified. Secondly one would have to be sure that changes were not due to multiple other factors such as a change in leadership, cohort of children, or implementation of another change. So how should researchers attempt to examine the impact of policies on capacity; or the outcomes of capacity building policies, depending upon the particular research question adopted? In dealing with this issue, this study will adopt a 'perception' approach, examining how members of the workforce perceive the policy to affect improvement.

2.4. Organisational capacity in the public sector

Direct transfer of knowledge between private and public sector is problematic because of the fundamental differences between the two environments (Paton and Mordaunt, 2004), particularly in terms of function (Honadle, 1981). While it could be argued that the driver of organisational capacity in the private sector is competitive pressures, for the public sector, its very purpose is more complex (Gray, 1994, Stewart and Ranson, 1994), and so therefore, is the purpose of its capacity, which means policy and practice implications are different. For example, performance criteria is related to function, and Pollitt (2003:9) suggests these extend beyond efficiency and effectiveness so that in public services *"there are at least two more important 'E's – economy and equity"* (also Hartley et al., 2002). This complexity makes *"their functioning and management more complex"*(Finger and Brand, 1999:130). Without dwelling further on the differences, and suffice to say that it is well recognised these differences exist (Pollitt, 2003:19), various writers have explored concepts related

specifically to capacity in public services, and some of these will be examined. For example, Jas and Skelcher's (2005) work, mentioned already, which examines the relationship between performance and capacity. Further support for this is argued here, although as discussed in section 2.3, while this study will not attempt to evaluate a set of performance related outcomes, it may be that it can provide further evidence of linkages between capacity and improvement in public policy implementation, at least in terms of workforce perceptions. The section also identifies work examining capacity indicators, and barriers to the development of organisational capacity.

In terms finding explicit links between capacity and improvement, there are several in the literature. For example, in the context of public sector innovation, Hartley and Rashman (2006:179) write that organisational capacity is about assimilating new knowledge as well as applying that new knowledge *"to lead and manage complex organizational change and bring about improvements"*. Rashman et al. (2006) further cite a number of authors in this matter. Examining financial management of U.S. public services, for example, Hou et al. (2003:296) support a relationship between capacity and performance, suggesting that *"the internal systemic capacity of government organizations becomes one of several critical preconditions for performance"*. Sanderson (2001:309) also links capacity to performance improvement, suggesting that *"local authorities need to develop capacity to achieve change and improvement based upon evidence of performance produced by evaluative systems"*. He suggests this is done through a change in organisational culture that embeds 'capacity for evaluative enquiry'. This 'capacity for evaluative enquiry' is brought about through a number of further capacities that require a 'supportive infrastructure' of systems and processes for their development. These further capacities are:

- Capacity for critical reflection and questioning;
- Capacity for effective dialogue, collaboration, communication;
- Capacity for research and analysis;
- Capacity for action planning and effective implementation.

Because of their nature as groups of capacities required before a particular capacity can be developed, it could be argued that these capacity themes could be likened to the 'capabilities' or 'dimensions' / 'components' of capacity that writers on absorptive capacity suggested were necessary aspects of developing capacity (e.g. Van den Bosch et al. (2005), Lane et al. (2001), Lane and Lubatkin (1998); section 2.2). This idea is returned to at the end of this section.

Continuing with the links between capacity and improvement, Martin (1999:54), examining the Best Value framework within local government, suggests that *"The improvement of local public services will however depend in large measure on the capacity of local agencies to implement these reforms."*. Improvement is taken to mean such things as quality and cost effectiveness of public services as set out in a government White Paper cited by Martin (1999). While the term 'capacity' is not explained by Martin (1999), it could be argued that it is taken to mean the ability to meet those government goals. The key contribution of Martin's (1999) paper to this review is its suggestion that capacity, required to achieve service improvement, is being constrained by cultural, structural, and skill-related factors, although the detail of each of these could be expanded upon by further research.

Other work has also identified barriers to capacity building in the public sector. A report by the ODPM (2003) produced to identify capacity building requirements in local government identified a number of barriers, the most significant of which was found to be lack of financial and temporal resources. Other barriers were central interference and prescription, resistance to change, recruitment problems, lack of skills, and poor leadership. The report (ODPM, 2003) also found a number of 'triggers' that catalysed improved capacity, most of which were peculiar to local government. These included such factors as receiving a poor inspection report or the launch of a major change programme. Most significant was said to be a change in leadership. This work links back to the private sector literature relating to absorptive capacity in joint ventures. Child and Faulkner (1998:311) suggested that the capacity to learn required *"the surmounting of cognitive and emotional barriers...[and] a reduction of organizational barriers..."*.

Other public sector literature discusses capacity indicators. For example, in their theoretical discussion of the concepts 'organisational learning' and the 'learning organisation', Finger and Brand (1999) aim to define six dimensions of a public organisation's capacity *to learn* based on Dixon's (1994) learning cycle. They define organisational learning *as "a continuous cycle of generating information, of integrating it into the organizational context, of collectively interpreting it, and of taking action on the basis of it."* (1999:149) and organisational learning capacity as *"its ability to learn individually and as a collective unit"* (ibid.). The six dimensions that make up an organisation's capacity to learn continuously are proposed by Finger and Brand (1999) as follows, and each are given alongside a number of possible indicators measuring progress:

- Individual learning capacities (ability to think systematically, to think critically, to put oneself in the mind of somebody else, openness of mind etc.);

- Collective learning capacities (group spirit, multi-functionality, capacity to dialogue, to deal productively with conflict etc.);
- Structural learning capacities (decentralized structures allowing for participation, small hierarchies, small units interacting with each other, integration of central functions etc.);
- Cultural learning capacities (culture of dialogue, of communication, of openness, of transparency, of trust, of risk taking, of comparison with the best etc.);
- Capacities resulting from the organisation of work (use of project groups, information systems, information on results, experimentation, decentralized control, job rotation etc.); and
- The capacity of the leadership to learn and to promote learning (behaviour, management style, methods of reward and punishment, ability to coach, to mentor, to accept critique, to question dominant views).

Finger and Brand (1999) recognise that measurement of those indicators they associate with 'structural capacity to learn' are more difficult to measure than the others. It could be argued that none of the indicators lend themselves to easy measurement, and that some form of benchmarking rather than an absolute measure, might be necessary because such indicators as 'culture of dialogue' are very open to subjective interpretation. While Finger and Brand's (1999) model goes some way towards conceptualising capacity to learn, and suggesting some possible operationalisations of each dimension, the model is open to further development and definition, as the list of indicators is not exhaustive. A key point made by the authors is that it is insufficient to focus on one aspect of capacity alone.

Honadle (1981:577) suggests that definitions of capacity vary *"in the extent to which they specify the activities that should be performed versus the results that are sought."*. This is a particularly relevant distinction here because this review finds a number of frameworks relating to types of capacity, each of which proceeds to do one of two things; either to give a range of 'capabilities' that are required for the development of that sort of capacity (i.e. activities that should be performed), or in other cases, to give a range of 'dimensions' against which an organisation can consider its capacity outcomes (i.e. results that should be sought). The difficulty is in distinguishing which framework fits in which category. As seen in Table 2-1 Newman et al. (2000) and Sanderson (2001), for example, both talk about 'capacities' that must be possessed before an organisation can develop 'capacity for change' or 'capacity for evaluative enquiry' respectively. One could talk about these capacities both in terms of activities that should be performed and in terms of results that should be sought (Honadle, 1981), although they are arguably the latter. Other frameworks can be more easily related to Honadle's (1981) notion of definitions that specify activities that should be performed in

order for an organisation to have capacity (rather than specifying results that should be sought). For example, studies by Newmann et al. (2000) and Van den Berg and Sleegers (1996) within the field of school improvement identify sets of components (also referred to as dimensions by Newmann et al. (2000)) necessary for developing capacity for improvement or innovation, respectively, and the report by the OPDM (2003) into capacity building requirements in local authorities (discussed already) identify six key areas to focus on in developing capacity.

These frameworks are identified together in Table 2-1. As with the Sanderson's (2001) four capacities said to create 'capacity for evaluative enquiry', it could be argued that these four capacity themes could be likened to the 'capabilities' or 'dimensions' / 'components' of capacity that writers on absorptive capacity suggested were necessary aspects of developing capacity (e.g. Van den Bosch et al. (2005), Lane et al. (2001), Lane and Lubatkin (1998); section 2.2). Table 2-1 brings these studies together, identifying for each case the 'capabilities' or 'components' or 'dimensions' that must be developed (either as activities to perform or, with a subtly different focus, results that must be sought) in order for capacity to arise.

Study / context	Type of capacity	Capacity sub-themes (capabilities / components / dimensions)
Newman et al. (2000) – Local government	'Change capacity' – a measure of managers' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation along 8 dimensions, clustered into 4 themes.	These four capacity themes represent areas authorities must develop in order to possess change capacity: (1) Capacity to adapt to external forces (2) Capacity to deliver business results (3) Capacity to ensure accountability and control (4) Developing cultural capacity for the future
Sanderson (2001) – Local government	'Capacity for evaluative enquiry' – linked to performance.	'Capacity for evaluative enquiry' is brought about through a number of further capacities that require a 'supportive infrastructure' of systems and processes for their development. (1) Capacity for critical reflection and questioning (2) Capacity for effective dialogue, collaboration, communication (3) Capacity for research and analysis (4) Capacity for action planning and effective implementation.
ODPM (2003) – Local government	'Capacity' - The right organization, systems, partnerships, people and processes to deliver against a particular agenda or plan.	Six key areas to focus on when assessing internal capacity of an organisation: (1) Finance (2) Systems and processes (3) People (4) Skills (5) Knowledge (6) Behaviour
Finger and Brand (1999) – Public sector	'Capacity to learn' – the organisation's ability to learn individually and as a collective unit.	Six dimensions making up the organisation's capacity to learn: (1) Individual learning capacities (2) Collective learning capacities (3) Structural

organisations		learning capacities (4) Cultural learning capacities (5) Capacities resulting from the organisation of work (6) The capacity of the leadership to learn and to promote learning
Honadle (1981) – Public sector organisations	'Management capacity'	Six activities that define 'capacity': (1) Anticipate and influence change (2) Make informed, intelligent decisions about policy (3) Develop programs to implement policy (4) Attract and absorb resources (5) Manage resources (6) Evaluate current activities to guide future action
Newmann et al. (2000) – Education sector	'Capacity to improve student achievement'	Five mutually influencing core components of school capacity (all influenced by the 'leadership' component): (1) Technical resources (2) Programme coherence (3) Professional learning community (4) Knowledge, skills, and dispositions of staff (5) Effective principal leadership
Van den Berg and Sleegers (1996) – Education sector	'Innovative capacity' - The competence of schools to implement innovations, initiated by either the government or the school itself, and to bring both types of innovation into relation with each other when necessary."	Four components of particular importance for innovative capacity: (1) The context of the school (2) Collaboration among teachers (3) Transformational school leadership (4) The functioning of the school as a learning organisation.
Child and	'Capacity to learn'	Capacity to learn is dependent up on four interrelated factors:

Faulkner (1998) – Firms in joint ventures		(1) Transferability of knowledge (inherent quality of the knowledge itself; its ease of transfer between parties; whether it is easily absorbed explicit knowledge, or tacit) (2) Receptivity of the partner's members to new knowledge (attitudes, time, and resources, of learners; openness of their culture to change) (3) Competence of the firm (its 'absorptive capacity'; competence at strategic, system, and technical levels) (4) Previous experience (of co-operation)
Zahra and George (2002) – Firms creating competitive advantage	'Absorptive capacity' – a set of organisational routines and processes by which firms acquire, assimilate, transform, and exploit knowledge to produce a dynamic organisational capability	These four capabilities are four 'dimensions' of absorptive capacity that combine and build on one another to help explain organisational outcomes recognising the value: (1) Assimilating; (2) Transforming; and (3) Exploiting external knowledge to commercial ends
Van den Bosch (2005); Lane et al. (2001); Lane and Lubatkin (1998) - commercial	'Absorptive capacity' – the ability to recognise the value of new external knowledge, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends	Three capabilities (Van den Bosch et al., 2005); Three components (Lane et al., 2001); Three dimensions (Lane and Lubatkin, 1998) of absorptive capacity: (1) Recognising the value; (2) Assimilating; and (3) Applying new external knowledge to commercial ends

Table 2-1 Frameworks identifying that capacity comprises certain results, or performance of certain activities

To bring together this body of literature relating to organisational capacity in the public sector, a number of issues should be highlighted. Firstly, the notion of barriers to capacity arose. Martin (1999) categorises these as cultural, structural, and skill-related factors; the ODPM (2003) suggest financial and temporal resources are the most problematic; Child and Faulkner (1998) identify cognitive/emotional, and organisational barriers. Clearly there is no consensus on how to categorise these barriers, and further work is needed in this area to contribute to the body of knowledge. A second point is that multiple capacity indicators have been identified. Table 2-1 compares understandings of capacity from a range of studies to find that capacity, in whatever form, tends to be defined in terms of further capabilities that an organisation must possess or do. This notion of capabilities as components of capacity could help this study to contribute to a clearer understanding of capacity, and will be attended to again in the discussion on perspectives of capacity building.

2.5. The concept of 'capacity building'

In contrast to the private sector literature, where the concept of 'capacity building' *"appears to be largely absent"* (Rashman et al., 2006), capacity building as an international activity in the public sector is not new, although much of the volume of information on the topic can be found in 'grey' literature (Milèn, 2001), including technical reports and working reports, rather than in academic writing. A good number of references come from such sources as the United Nations Development Programme, who have actively encouraged capacity building as a major issues in attempts to attain sustainable development (Gunnarsson, 2001). Some of the academic literature, particularly in the field of local government, discusses the need for development of organisational capacity as a means to improve services in relation to government reforms such as the Beacon Council Scheme (Rashman and Hartley, 2002, Rashman and Radnor, 2005), Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Jas and Skelcher, 2005), and Best Value (Martin, 1999), although these do not seek to define the notion of 'capacity building'.

A report by the United Nations Secretariat to document UN capacity building activities (Maconick and Morgan, 1999:14) noted that capacity building has been conducted for centuries in fields including the military, trade, science and culture, in terms of interventions designed to improve the ability of groups in another country *"to carry out certain functions or achieve certain objectives"*. The modern concept of capacity building, or 'capacity development' was originally associated with notions of stability and growth, technological development, and institution building in the developing world, and has continued to grow in importance, particularly since the mid-nineties (World Bank, 2007)

Since its use as a strategic activity by the international development community, the concept has been applied in social, as well as economic contexts, more recently becoming embedded in wider public sector discourse (Harrow, 2001). Harrow argues that its application in this field is problematic because the languages used relating to definitions, and therefore, implications and expected outcomes of capacity building are vague. This becomes an issue when capacity building programmes, which may carry substantial funding, cause organisations to attempt alignment of their goals with those of capacity building accordingly and a lack of clarity leads to organisational scepticism about its intended outcomes.

The concept has been a prominent handle for international development organisations (UNDP, 1998, UNEP, 2002), and writers in this field (Milèn, 2001 addressing participants of a World Health Organization project, Eade, 1997 writing for Oxfam), to focus on, amongst the growing concern for social renewal. These organisations have latched onto the notion, incorporating it into programmes for governmental reforms and proposing it as a desired outcome of their support. An assumption they make is that capacity building is a legitimate and achievable goal for funders, and that improvements will be sustainable. This is in part due to problems with measurability of the concept and its potential indicators. Two main problems arise. Firstly, capacity growth over time is a difficult variable to measure – one has to set appropriate timescales, choose suitable indicators, and deal with issues of attribution (Goldsmith, 1993, Land, 2000). Secondly, the value of activities associated with capacity building are hard to assess. For example, 'education', 'training', 'sustainability', 'partnership', and the like, are seen to hold value in themselves both as means to an end, and as ends in themselves, although they too are elusive concepts whose value cannot be taken as given, and whose meaning is often contested (Harrow, 2001). The problem is so embedded that, as Harrow (2001:210) argues, *"virtually any activity will qualify as a capacity building initiative"*.

Some government and agency reports have attempted to chart the changes in meaning of the term and arrive at some consensus (e.g. Milèn, 2001, Maconick and Morgan, 1999, UNEP, 2002). The World Bank's Capacity Development Resource Centre (2007), devoted to development of capacity building programmes, suggests that within the international development community at least, there is consensus about the term 'capacity'. Table 2-2 gives a comparison of international development capacity definitions to show similarities:

Study	Definition of capacity
World Bank (2007) – International development	The ability of individuals, institutions, and societies to solve problems, make informed choices, define their priorities and plan their futures. The objective of aid assistance is to help developing countries build their capacities, that is boost their ability to achieve their development goals
Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995)	The ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably.
UNDP (1998:5) – International development	The power of something (a system, an organisation, a person) to perform or to produce.
ODPM (2003:section 1.1) – UK government	The right organization, systems, partnerships, people and processes to deliver against a particular agenda or plan.

Table 2-2 Definitions of 'capacity' in international development

In contrast to the above finding that definitions of 'capacity' are similar in international development, it is the concept of 'capacity building' that is problematic in terms of finding a common understanding, and definitions tend to be rather ambiguous and sometimes confusing and overlapping (Gunnarsson, 2001). Under the World Bank definition in Table 2-2 'capacity development' is equated to a *process*, the goal of which is 'capacity to do something'. A number of specific 'capacity building' activities are recognised in this field, including technical assistance, and training. The problem of measuring capacity, or its development, still remains, however, *"because capacity is a process, not a definite output"* (World Bank, 2007); and similarly, *"not a passive state but part of a continuing process...[and has different meanings and interpretations dependent upon] who uses it and the context in which it is used "* (UNDP, 1998:5). Indeed, as with notions of organisational capacity and capacity to learn, precision about the meaning, and thus, the measurement of capacity building, is often absent from national and international policy documents on the subject (Harrow, 2001).

2.6. Differences in definition: conceptual issues

This review finds that the literature discusses, defines, or categorises 'capacity building' in terms of a number of different approaches:

- Scope, breadth
- Purpose; means, or ends
- Level, dimension

For instance, as this review will discuss, the term is used (often without giving reference to a definition) in a very broad or very narrow sense of what its **scope** might entail, reflecting the particular operational approach adopted (Table 2-3 compares definitions). Cohen (1992), for example, takes a narrow perspective, referring to the training of government officers by international advisory teams as capacity building. The **purpose** of capacity building is another area of confusion, one which this review will attempt to clarify. Further, the discussion of aspects of capacity building may also be delimited by **'level'** of stakeholder concerned with capacity in any one type of organisation; either through input, outcome, or the process of building capacity. For example, national, sectoral, institutional, and funding bodies will have varying boundaries of interest in capacity building, and put different parameters, or perspectives, on what they hold to be important in building capacity (UNDP, 1998, e.g. Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, Mitchell and Sackney, 2000).

Before venturing forward to explore the different sorts of definition, some common confusions are addressed. First, in the field of International Development activities, the terms 'capacity development' and 'capacity enhancement' are used synonymously with 'capacity building' (Maconick and Morgan, 1999). These terms have more breadth than 'organisational development', emphasising the whole system, environment, or context within which individuals, organisations, and societies operate and interact (UNDP, 1998). Second, neither does capacity building correspond with 'technical assistance', *"the transfer or adaptation of ideas, knowledge, practices, technologies or skills to foster economic development"* (World Bank, 1991). While this serves as an instrument for supporting capacity building, it remains distinct from it, in that it is a means to an end, and often a short term one at that. Certainly, not all technical assistance builds capacity. In many situations it may compensate for inadequate local capacity (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995). Third, capacity building is a much broader concept than 'institution building', which it has progressed beyond in its consideration of multi-sectoral and multi-level perspectives (Maconick and Morgan, 1999). Fourth, 'capacity development' and 'institutional development' are also often used interchangeably, but shall remain distinct for the purposes of this research.

In terms of linking the three approaches to this current study, the understanding that each of the following sections contributes will be used in section 2.9, which summarises the key debates to provide a platform from which tighter research aims and questions can be developed. It will also be taken forward into the discussion, along with analysis relating to perceptions of capacity for improvement, in order to develop understandings of the notions of capacity and capacity building. The discussion of 'levels' is also used to situate the

frameworks used in this study into a wider, more systemic, context. This study examines organisational capacity for improvement, and the following discussion shows the level at which the notion of 'internal capacity' of organisations fits into these frameworks, and how the notion of 'influences on internal capacity' (to be examined in section 2.8) fits into the context of these other frameworks.

2.6.1. Scope / breadth of the definition

In its narrow sense, 'capacity building' in the context of international development tends to refer to the *process* of enhancing individual skills, or strengthening the competence or a particular organisation or set of organisations (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995). Cohen (1993:1) suggests the linguistic meaning of capacity centres around individual ability or aptitude to perform a functional task *"the measure of which is usually described in terms of "capability": ability, competence, and efficiency"* and so argues that the concept of capacity building has been used too generally by academics and professionals. He defines capacity building as:

"public sector capacity building [which] seeks to strengthen targeted human resources (managerial, professional and technical) in particular institutions and to provide those institutions with the means whereby those resources can be marshalled and sustained effectively to perform planning, policy formulation, and implementation tasks throughout government on any priority topic."

This very narrow definition is a reaction to the blurring of distinctions between human, organisational, and institutional capacities; particularly to the broadest definitions that associate capacity building with generalised development efforts. For example, North (North, 1992:6) equates capacity building *"with the total of human development"*. This definition, although broad in the extreme, is a move away from notions of human-centred 'ends' and is fairly typical of understandings in the international development community (Gunnarsson, 2001). Understandings taking a broader interpretation go beyond the focus on individuals and focus in some way on the normative framework within which individuals function. Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, for example, (1995:4) refer to general conventions, laws, regulations, policies, and social processes as aspects of a framework within which capacity can be built.

In general, current thinking on capacity is far broader than the narrow definition, common of fifteen years ago, which emphasised individual training and organisational development (Milèn, 2001, Gunnarsson, 2001). Morgan's (1993:2) definition, for example: *"the ability of*

individuals, groups, institutions, organisations and societies to identify and meet development challenges over time" is very wide indeed. It encompasses the developments in human resources advocated as capacity building by Cohen (1993, 1995), as well as changes in the institutional environment, and reforms and training of management. It also moves away from capacity of the individual, to capacity of 'the organisation', and assumes that organisations can possess 'capacity'. Among the most widely applied definitions within international development is the one used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1998:5): *"the ability of individuals and organisations or organisational units to perform functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably"*. This definition lies between the broadest view that equates capacity with development and the narrowest perspective that equates capacity with training. It is derived from Grindle and Hilderbrand's (1995:445) definition of capacity: *"the ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably"* which recognises the problem of having too wide a conceptual definition if one is to operationalise capacity building in a meaningful way. Table 2-3 shows how definitions range from broad to narrow.

Capacity building is…	**Example of definition**	
Equated with the totality of human development	*"a condition of self-sustaining national growth and progress in human well-being"* (North, 1992) *"the ability of individuals, groups, institutions, organisations and societies to identify and meet development challenges over time"* (Morgan, 1993)	↑ **Broad**
Equated with the ability to perform the right tasks in the best way over time	*"the ability of individuals and organisations or organisational units to perform functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably"* (UNDP, 1998) *"improvements in the ability of public sector organisations, either singly, or in cooperation with other organisations, to perform appropriate tasks, effectively, efficiently and sustainably"* (Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995)	
Equated with the strengthening of human resource capability	*"to strengthen targeted human resources (managerial, professional and technical) in particular institutions and to provide those institutions with the means whereby those resources can be marshalled and sustained effectively to perform planning, policy formulation, and implementation tasks throughout government on any priority topic"* (Cohen, 1993)	**Narrow** ↓

Table 2-3 Comparison of capacity building definitions

Under Grindle and Hilderbrand's (1995) definition, it could be reasoned that *"appropriateness"* indicates that functions must be specified and defined in each case, and some criteria should be used as a basis for assessing their appropriateness as functions. Current thinking emphasising the *"appropriateness"* of capacity building functions expresses an inherent link with strategic management. Indeed, the UNDP definition in the next paragraph is said to be based upon fundamental strategic management concepts (UNDP, 1998). At an operational level, appropriate functions are those which contribute to the strategic objectives of the organisational level in question, be it the team-, organisation-, or system-level (Milèn, 2001). This review returns to the notion of 'levels' of analysis in section 2.6.3 to allow discussion of capacity frameworks.

Broad definitions bind capacity tightly with performance; emphasising *achievement* of strategic objectives. For instance, research by the UNDP into developing a framework for assessing effectiveness in capacity building advocated a *"functional focus"* approach to capacity building, and accordingly identified three critical functional capacities, including the capacities to *"define a long-term vision that would lead to sustainable development...formulate sound policies and design programs to support the long-term strategy...implement and manage effectively the various programs and projects"* (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995)

A later definition by the UNDP and the OECD Development Assistance Committee continued to define capacity development in terms of achievement:

"the process by which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to (a) perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives, and (b) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner"(UNDP, 1998:6).

Similarly, Milèn reasons that *"Capacity is an instrument for an individual, team, organisation or system to achieve objectives"* (2001:4), and that this definition is translatable across fields so that in health, for example:

"Capacity of a health professional, a team, an organisation or a health system is an ability to perform the defined functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably so that the functions contribute to the mission, policies and strategic objectives of the team, organisation and the health system." (ibid.)

There is a two-way interaction here: while capacity is a means by which parts of the system 'perform', or achieve strategic management objectives; it could also be argued that poor performance, or failing to meet objectives at any of these levels may arise from 'gaps' in capacity.

2.6.2. Purpose and outcomes of capacity building

The debate over the purpose of 'capacity building' begs the question of whether the term represents a process or an outcome. Discussion over the nature of capacity building; as outcome or as process, is less a debate and more a confusion of terminology in the literature. Recognition of this dichotomy is nothing new. Eade (1997:2) asks whether capacity building is *"a precondition for, or a by-product of, international cooperation...A means or an end, or both"*. Maconick and Morgan suggest that in some circles capacity building is seen as *"a second-order means to first-order development ends"* (1999:19), while another perspective sees it as *"a development objective in and of itself "* (ibid.). Rashman and Radnor talk about the need within local authorities *"to develop the organisational capacities to achieve change, learning, innovation, and service improvement"* (2005:25). In this quotation, 'capacity' can be seen as both a means and an end.

Indeed, 'capacity' has been defined both in terms of the activities an organisation should be performing (means) and the results it should be achieving (ends). So on the one hand, the present continuous use of the words 'capacity building' suggests a process whereby 'capacity' is achieved through the process of 'building'. For example, Rashman et al.'s (2006:26) understanding is that *"organizational capacity is the content (e.g. structures, systems, culture) that the organization possesses and capacity building is the process where it acquires capacity."*. Similarly, Van den Bosch et al. (2005:289) write that *"many scholars recognize that a firm's absorptive capacity is not a goal in itself, but that it moderates important organizational outcomes."*. The notion of having capacity *to learn* or capacity *to perform* Child and Faulkner (1998) also suggests capacity is the means that enable an organisation to achieve certain ends. Indeed, it could be argued that there are multiple results that could be achieved by an organisation with capacity (Honadle, 1981). On the other hand, it has been suggested that capacity building may hold intrinsic value as an end in its own right where the development in 'capacity' is human centred. So rather than being a means to some organisational end, it holds value itself by fostering such things as job satisfaction and self-esteem (Milèn, 2001).

In terms of capacity building as a process, one area that would benefit from clarification relates to its objectives. Unlike the private sector, which generally and predominantly aims to

produce a satisfactory profit; public sector organisations have multiple goals that frequently defy measurement (Wall, 2005) and are *"often ambiguous, contradictory and subject to contestation through the political process"* (Hartley et al., 2002:399). Newmann et. al (2000:261) suggest that *"[in order] to characterize the capacity of an entity, one must first describe its intended function."*. On this basis, it could be argued that it may be possible to develop an overarching understanding of public sector capacity, provided an all-encompassing function, or functions, could be identified.

This review finds that implicit in a number of references is the notion that capacity building should relate to an organisation's 'aims' or 'strategic objectives' (e.g. Milèn, 2001, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995, Hadfield et al., 2002, Hopkins et al., 1994, World Bank, 2007, Skinner, 1997). What these objectives might be, particularly in terms of an all-encompassing framework of capacity for the public sector, provides a starting point for operationalising the notion of 'function'.

Although, functionally speaking, 'aims' or 'goals' are a useful aid to understanding organisational processes and function, from a phenomenological point of view they can only ever be a socially constructed set that when ascribed to 'the organisation' or 'the school' amounts to *"an unwanted reification"* (Hoyle, 1986:54). The paradox here is that organisations cannot have goals themselves, and yet cannot function without them. Similarly, notions of the 'learning organisation' and 'organisational learning' raise philosophical questions, but these can be addressed when one considers how organisational learning does not necessarily reflect a summation of the learning of individuals currently within it (Nutley and Davies, 2001, Argyris and Schön, 1978). Hoyle (1986:60) resolves the issue of organisational goals to some degree by proposing that *"high level abstraction goals at least give some indication of a general expectation of what a school ought to be doing, and as such they at least give some broad direction to the organisation"*. So it could be argued it is acceptable to talk about the goals of an organisation at this level, and to refer to 'the organisation' or 'the school' as an entity.

While the function of an organisation may be given in terms of its 'output' goals, the goals of an organisation do not relate solely to output. In his empirical research paper 'the Definition of Organisational Goals', Gross (1969) identified 'support goals' as well as 'output goals', as shown below:

Type of goal		Sorts of sub-themes
Output goals		The inculcation of knowledge, skills, and values in students
Support goals	Adaptation goals	The attraction of staff and students, the procurement of resources and the validation of the activities of the university
	Management goals	The administration of the university, the assignment of priorities, the handling of conflict
	Motivational goals	The creation of satisfaction and commitment in both staff and students
	Positional goals	The maintenance of the university's standing in relation to other universities, the improvement on this, and its defence in the face of pressures likely to reduce this standing

Table 2-4 Five kinds of organisational goal for a university (Gross, 1969)

To account for this existing knowledge, it could be argued that any functional definition of capacity should not relate only to the output goals of an organisation, but should consider its support goals also, whether implicitly or explicitly.

While precise function varies from one organisation to another, public sector organisations are distinct from their counterparts in the business world because definitions relating capacity building to function through the function of 'survival' ability are insufficient for public service organisations (Honadle, 1981, Boyne, 2003). Such organisations must aim beyond survival to provide worthwhile function. A number of authors make reference to sustainability in improvements when defining and discussing the purpose of capacity building in the public sector (UNDP, 1998, Morgan, 1993, Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995).

The achievement of sustainability of improvement could be one function all organisations have in common. From an educational perspective, Hopkins and Reynolds' (2001) finding, that *"without the possession of 'capacity', schools will be unable to sustain continuous improvement efforts that result in improved student achievement"* implies that capacity is required for *sustainable continuous improvement*. Implicit also in a question from OfSTED, asking whether a school has developed *"The capacity (that is the commitment, strategy and systems in place) to secure further improvement"* (OfSTED, 1997), is an emphasis on sustainable continuous improvement. This notion of 'sustainable continuous improvement' seems to be a defining aspect of function of an entity, and may also reflect the purpose of capacity building. Indeed, sustainability is emphasised in definitions such as Grindle and

Hilderbrand's (1995) (examined further in section 2.6.3), whereby performance outputs of capacity building relate to effectiveness, efficiency, and *sustainability*. The notion of 'sustainable continuous improvement' is also more specific than talking about 'an organisation's goals' and, as such, any definition brought forth from this study in the discussion will utilise this concept.

2.6.3. Levels of capacity building

Milèn (2001) suggests that two paradigms, emerging in the mid 1990s, have shaped the way capacity building is seen in the field of development co-operation. The first related to notions of 'partnership' and 'ownership', the rhetoric of which was particularly prominent in the area of international development co-operation. As systems thinking took hold, this paradigm broadened so that capacity building initiatives were examined in a wider, systemic, context, which formed the second framework.

For the decades up until this point, existing development co-operation was based around technical interventions; capacity building being equated with individual training and organisational restructuring. Milèn (2001) details a succinct history of the reasons why capacity development initiatives revolving around technical assistance, and prior to this new paradigm, were criticised so. Suffice to say, a definition of capacity building that focused narrowly on training and development will not be appropriate for the purposes of this research, and this review has shown definitions to have moved beyond this as essentially, the outcomes of past actions became widely recognised as unsatisfactory by the international development community. Reflections on the situation by those involved led to emergence of a new paradigm, whereby notions of donor-beneficiary partnership, and local ownership of capacity building were central.

The second framework, that of 'levels' or 'dimensions', has also changed the rhetoric of capacity building. Essentially, this is about the way in which performance of an individual, team, or organisation, is influenced not just by the entity in which capacity is to be built, but by the wider system. These wider levels are fundamental to analysis of gaps in capacity and design of gap bridging strategies. This review has found there to be a variety of approaches to modelling the concept of 'levels' of capacity (e.g. Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, Maconick and Morgan, 1999, UNDP, 1998) within a range of public sector fields. It is likely that there are as many permutations of the 'levels' approach, whereby capacity building is linked to systems thinking, as there are autonomous minds writing on the subject. For instance, the United Nations Development Programme uses three levels in its guidelines for capacity building, shown in Figure 2-1:

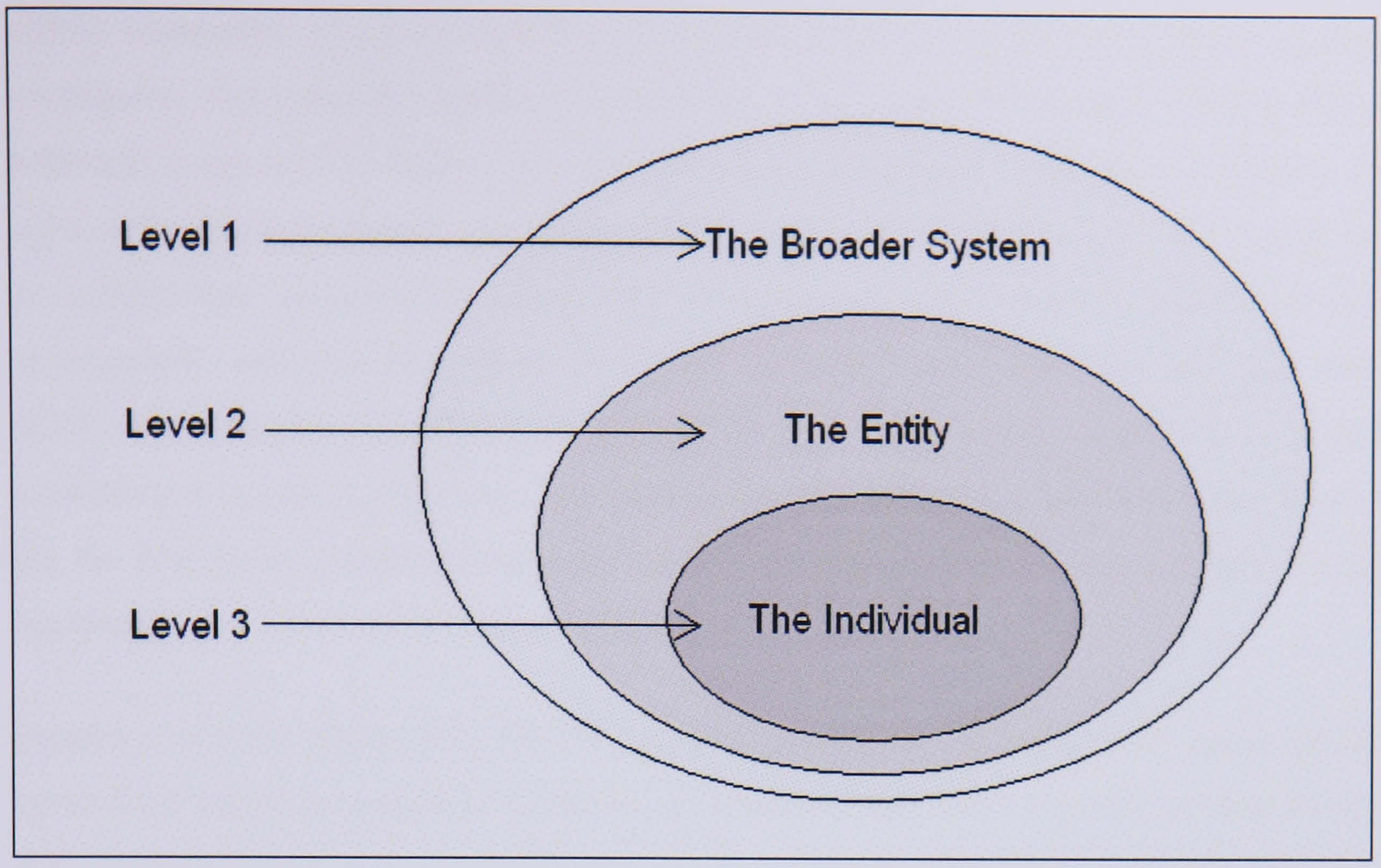

Figure 2-1 Levels of capacity within a systems context (UNDP, 1998)

These are broken down into further dimensions within each level. Maconick and Morgan (1999) refer to these as micro-, meso-, and macro-levels, noting that other methodologies refer to the highest level as the 'situation', the 'market', the 'action environment', 'enabling environment', or more simply, the 'environment'. Grindle and Hilderbrand's (1995) framework illustrates this same concept, defining five levels that impact on capacity and capacity building interventions, and which better take into account the public sector's complex environment (see Appendix 1). These five levels are the action environment, the institutional context of the public sector, the task network, organisation, and human resources.

Table 2-5, Table 2-6, and Table 2-7 facilitate comparison of a series of frameworks by splitting them along the lines of a three-dimensional framework of 'system', 'entity', and 'individual' (UNDP, 1998). These tables differ from Table 2-1 in the sense that (a) frameworks relate to capacity building rather than to types of capacity; and (b) frameworks make reference to different levels at which capacity can be built.

At first glance it appears that the frameworks use different vocabulary to describe essentially the same sorts of theme. It could be argued, however, that there are two sorts of framework relating to the 'levels' approach. Although in both sorts of framework examples can be found of the operationalisation of either 'capacity' or 'capacity building', the first sort specify the 'levels' along which capacity can be built, as a main function of the framework. Examples are: the three UNDP levels (1998), Paul's (1995) four 'dimensions', Mitchell and Sackney's

(2000) 'categories' of capacity, and Grindle and Hilderbrand's (1995) five 'levels' impacting on capacity and capacity building interventions. The second approach is subtly different. Although it can still be situated within a 'levels' framework, its purpose is to address those aspects that might be called 'capabilities' that *comprise* capacity. Examples are Newmann et. al's (2000) five 'components' of capacity, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker's (1995) four critical 'dimensions', and also Honadle's (1981) six 'abilities' that define capacity, and Milèn's (2001) key 'success factors'. Cohen's (1995) five 'dimensions' approach is arguably something of a hybrid of the two approaches, because although it focuses on the 'levels' as per the first group mentioned above, it is strongly operationalised into a series of critical functions.

Breaking systems down into 'levels' allows capacity to be understood more easily in operational terms, as research focuses upon activities that build capacity at each level. As demonstrated above, however, vocabulary is inconsistent. Frameworks of note from across the public sector refer to 'components' or 'dimensions' of capacity. Complicating things further, Harrow (2001) refers to Ohiorhenuan and Wunker's (1995) critical 'dimensions' of capacity building as 'components', or 'elements'; Newmann et al.'s (2000) 'components' are referred to in a later paper (King and Newmann, 2001) as 'dimensions', also. (Table 2-2 gives a range of examples of frameworks that examine 'levels' of capacity). Frameworks by Ohiorhenuan and Wunker (1995) and Paul (1995) represent international agency perspectives; the former being written from within the Global Environment Facility; the latter published by the World Health Organization. Frameworks of Stoll (1999), and Mitchell and Sackney (2000) take an Education perspective.

What the labels 'dimensions' and 'components' have in common is that they break down categories of things organisations must *have* if capacity is to be built. One possible way of linking the literature on capacity and capacity building together and finding the lowest common denominator might be to suggest that if 'capacity' is the thing an organisation needs to achieve, or build, (in order to meet its goals), the various 'dimensions' and 'components' used in the capacity frameworks and definitions are the 'capabilities' organisations must achieve in order to develop the capacity. This study will examine these capabilities (capacity themes) to see how they can be built. This will further contribute to an understanding of capacity and capacity building in the discussion.

The frameworks shown in Table 2-5, Table 2-6, and Table 2-7 acknowledge the multi-dimensional nature of capacity building; reflecting the notion that sustainable capacity should be grounded within a multi-dimensional strategic focus. They are based on the same thinking as that of the 'levels' and parallel one another to some extent. In essence, these

frameworks identify the key levels of analysis which affect capacity building. At present, however, while these frameworks are comprehensive in identifying the capacities that need to be developed (Hadfield et al., 2002), they tend to be weak both on empirical evidence and in depth. Those commissioned by government departments (UNDP, 1998, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995, Paul, 1995, ODPM, 2003) tend also to reference other practitioner and government literature. Cohen's (1995) analytical framework is based on an in-depth literature review but remains untested in terms of its ability to improve measurable capacity indicators.

Frame-work and breakdown of levels	UNDP (1998) 3 dimensions of capacity in a systems context	Cohen (1995) 5 (flexible) dimensions of capacity building in a public sector context	ODPM (2003) 3 dimensions of capacity building to deliver effective strategies	Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) 5 levels impacting on capacity and capacity building interventions	Ohiorhenuan and Wunker (1995) 4 critical dimensions of capacity building	Paul (1995) 4 dimensions of capacity building in the context of the Health sector				Stoll (1999) 3 types of influence on the internal capacity of schools	Mitchell and Sackney (2000) 3 mutually influencing categories of capacity for building a learning community in schools
The broader system	**The system level** (policy, legal / regulatory, management / accountability, resources, and process dimensions)	**External institutional, manpower & systems support** **Task environment** **Training capacity** (identifying external institutions that facilitate efforts to build human resource capacity)	**Institutional capacity building** (development and strengthening of external links, e.g. the ability to create effective partnerships)	**The action environment** **The institutional context of the public sector** **The task network**	**External support** (getting support of significant outsiders)	Human vs. Institutional	Planning vs. Implementation	Micro vs. Macro	Cognitive vs. Practice	**External context** (e.g. local and broader community, political action and tone, global change forces, professional learning infrastructure)	

Table 2-5 Comparison of frameworks on 'dimensions' or 'components' of capacity: The broader level

Framework	UNDP (1998)	Cohen (1995)	ODPM (2003)	Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995)	Ohiorhenuan and Wunker (1995)	Paul (1995)				Stoll (1999)	Mitchell and Sackney (2000)
						Human vs. Institutional	Planning vs. Implementation	Micro vs. Macro	Cognitive vs. Practice		
The entity	**The entity level** (mission and strategy, culture / structure and competencies, processes, human resources dimensions)	**Capacity building stages** (planning, recruiting, training, leadership)	**Organisational capacity building** (focus on people, culture, systems and processes – within the authority, developed to meet specific organisational goals)	**Organisations** (structures, processes, resources, management styles)	**Organisational processes** (systems, procedures, accountability) **Physical resources** (financial, budgetary)					**Social and structural learning context of the organisation** (e.g. culture, relationships, structures, leadership, support staff, morale, history, mix of pupils)	**Organisational** (shared leadership, supportive structures, effective whole-school norms, collaborative processes) **Interpersonal** (team building and establishing a supportive climate

Table 2-6 Comparison of frameworks on 'dimensions' or 'components' of capacity: The entity level

Framework	UNDP (1998)	Cohen (1995)	ODPM (2003)	Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995)	Ohiorhenuan and Wunker (1995)	Paul (1995)				Newmann et al. (2000)	Stoll (1999)	Mitchell and Sackney (2000)
						Human vs. Institutional	Planning vs. Implementation	Micro vs. Macro	Cognitive vs. Practice			
The individual	**The individual level** (people and small interpersonal networks)	**Targeted personnel capacity** (managers, professionals, technicians)	**Individual capability development** (development of individual skills and competencies)	**Human resources** (managerial, professional, technical talent. Links between training and performance)	**Human resources** (managerial, professional, technical, administrative. Training, and incentive systems)					**Knowledge, skills, and dispositions of staff**	**Individuals within the organisation** (e.g. their knowledge, skills, experience, and beliefs)	**Personal capacity** (producing knowledge, experimenting, reflecting on practice, professional networking)

Table 2-7 Comparison of frameworks on 'dimensions' or 'components' of capacity: The individual level

For the purposes of this study, although organisational capacity for improvement will be examined at the organisational level, the 'levels' approach to examining capacity is useful because it shows where the organisation fits into the wider system. It further allows examination of the spheres of influence over an organisation's internal capacity for improvement. The notion of 'influences' on internal capacity will be examined in detail in section 2.8. Table 2-5, Table 2-6, and Table 2-7 show Stoll's (1999) framework examining these influences, showing how they compare with existing level-related capacity frameworks.

2.7. Background to the field of Education

This review now focuses in on Education as a field of the public sector where 'capacity' is a frequently used term. In common with the findings of the international development community regarding failure of reforms, the concept of capacity has been utilised by policy makers and academics to account for these failings in the field of Education also (Hadfield et al., 2002). Harrow (2001) observes that the same optimism about the ability of 'capacity' to solve problems can also be found in the Education literature. Stoll (1999), for example, writes about the importance of internal capacity: *"my research and development work in school effectiveness and school improvement in Britain, Canada and elsewhere has led me to believe that a vital clue is the school's internal capacity"* (1999:506). Hopkins and Reynolds' (2001) imply also that capacity is required for sustainable continuous improvement, and in a strong critique of policy reforms, Fullan (1995) cites evidence from research into school restructuring to suggest that capacity building, both in terms of knowledge / skills expansion, and information sharing and processing, is critical if schools are to become learning organisations (1995). Before narrowing focus on to some specific educational capacity-related frameworks, however, this review examines the broader field of education in order to contextualise these frameworks and this study within a wider picture of the current paradigmatic state of that body of literature. The following overview will bring the discussion back full circle to capacity building, indicating the importance of the notion of capacity in developing the research questions.

This review finds that the body of knowledge within the field of Education broadly attempts to answer two questions. The first gives rise to an outcome-focused (Gray et al., 1999a) approach known as school effectiveness research, and asks: what do schools really look like in their daily operations? The second gives rise to a process-focused approach known as school improvement practice, and asks: how do schools develop over time? (Bollen, 1997). The school effectiveness tradition is typically concerned with the structures and culture of an

organisation and how these are expressed in its policies and practices, with particular focus on how they relate to and promote both teacher effectiveness at classroom level, and the overall goals at the school level. School effectiveness can be defined:

> *"the extent to which any (educational) organization as a social system, given certain resources and means, fulfils its objectives without incapacitating its means and resources and without placing undue strain upon its members."* (Bollen, 1997:2)

In comparison, *school improvement* is concerned with enhancing and realising the organization's capacity to achieve its goals and to promote teacher effectiveness at classroom level (Hargreaves, 2001:490). Bollen (1997:3) defines school improvement thus:

> *"a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.".*

The dual contributions of school effectiveness research and school improvement practice; which Townsend (2001) likens to Siamese twins, has had profound influence on Education policy and practice to date. Historically there have been problems in the relationship between the two aspects of Education research due to differences in methodological preferences and foci (Gray et al., 1999a). While school improvement has a clear focus on the learning process, school effectiveness concerns itself with outcomes. Nevertheless, the early 1990s saw proponents of an integrated paradigm arguing for *"interpenetration and synthesis of both bodies of knowledge in the interests of improving pupil performance and school quality"* (Reynolds and Stoll, 1997:101). In bringing the two together, the weaknesses of each were apparently addressed (Reynolds and Stoll, 1997, Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998, Reynolds et al., 1997, Gray et al., 1999b). School effectiveness research was offering improvement 'means' and 'goals' to practitioners in school improvement. It contributed the value added methodology for judging school effectiveness and for disaggregating schools into their component parts of departments and teachers. It also brought a large-scale, proven in practice knowledge base about 'what works' at the school level in terms of student outcomes. School effectiveness was seen to benefit from school improvement's concepts of the school, the learning environment and its understanding of the process of change. School improvement also provided schools with designs for development planning and guidelines and strategies for implementation to bring change to the classroom level (Reynolds and Stoll, 1997, Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001). The notion of capacity for improvement is seen as a key idea linking school effectiveness and school improvement (Hargreaves, 2001).

More recently, a new paradigm of effectiveness/improvement work represents a new way of focusing upon the practical problem of improving schools. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) refer to this paradigm as 'the third age of school improvement', suggesting it sits within a context of substantial external pressure upon schools to improve, and increasingly tight resource constraints. It has been based on a gradual drawing together of the two disciplines and a recognition of the limited success or even *failure* of education reforms to bring about student achievement in line with policy objectives (Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001, Gray et al., 1999a). Hopkins (2001) cites a number of studies suggesting that traditional strategies have not brought forth the hoped for results, leaving a situation open to short-termism. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) suggest that any claims that approaches within this new paradigm are valid strategies to improve learning remain unproven. They claim work is needed in three areas: to develop context-specific school improvement; to focus school improvement on the learning level; and to conceptualise, operationalise and develop 'the capacity for improvement' (Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001).

2.8. Capacity building in Education

In general, use of the term 'capacity' does not differ significantly between Education and the wider public sector. The idea that schools have a certain 'capacity', or capacities for dealing with change, for improvement, or for leadership, is increasingly being discussed among academics in the UK, often in reference to the 'third age' improvement (section 2.7). As mentioned earlier in relation to the purpose and outcomes of capacity (2.6.2) OfSTED has its own definition of capacity, using the term when assessing a poorly performing school's ability to maintain their improvement out of Special Measures. OfSTED asks whether that school has developed *"The capacity (that is the commitment, strategy and systems in place) to secure further improvement"* (OfSTED, 1997). Again, an emphasis on sustainable continuous improvement is implicit in this definition, apparently confirming the importance of sustainability as a defining aspect of capacity, as discussed in 2.6.2.

Theoretical definitions in Education tend to distinguish between the notions of capacity as (Hadfield et al., 2002):

- A general ability or potential of a school to improve pupil outcomes, manage and learn from change, and sustain their own development.
- The types of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and relationships required of individuals and teams within a school that underpin its development.

The first could be summed up as 'a school's capacity *to do something*', or 'output' capacities, and relates to the functional focus approach discussed in section 2.6.1 whereby capacity building has some functional outcome that leads to effectiveness. As with definitions found in the public sector at large, there is an underlying implication of those strategic management objectives that would include the sustaining of continuous improvement. Two examples are: Hargreaves (2001:288), who suggests 'capacity for improvement' *"is assumed to characterise a school that sustains its effectiveness by successfully managing change in a context of instability and reform."*; and Stoll (1999:506), who defines 'internal capacity' as *"'the power to engage in and sustain continuous learning of teachers and the school itself for the purpose of enhancing student learning."*.

The latter type of theoretical distinction could be summed up as 'individual and team capacities *for certain things*', or perhaps 'input capacities'. An example might be Van den Berg and Sleegers (1996:201) 'innovative capacity' (shown in Table 2-1), which is *"The competence of schools to implement innovations, initiated by either the government or the school itself, and to bring both types of innovation into relation with each other when necessary."*.

The remainder of this review discusses work conducted in the field of Education that recognises the importance of developing capacity for sustained improvement through focusing on levels of organisational capacity beyond the individual teacher. As in the public sector at large, this review finds that writers in the field of Education have attempted to break down analysis of capacity in terms of 'levels' or 'dimensions'. Most frameworks focus on dimensions *of* capacity (Mitchell and Sackney, 2000, Van den Berg and Sleegers, 1996, Newmann et al., 2000), although Stoll's (1999) model is unique in that it examines dimensions *that influence* capacity (although still looking at three broad levels). Van den Berg's (1996) framework is less significant to this study because it focuses on *innovative capacity*. Further, it does not contribute anything that is not examined in other frameworks, for instance: school context (Stoll, 1999); collaboration, and the school as a learning organisation (Hopkins et al., 1994, Newmann et al., 2000); transformational leadership (Hopkins et al., 1994).

In common with the studies in Table 2-1, some research in Education has attempted to operationalise capacity for improvement by defining what it means to schools in behavioural terms. Particularly significant here (because of their focus on improvement within Education) are Newmann et. al.'s (2000) framework, and the body of work looking at the specific 'internal conditions' that contribute to capacity building.

First, addressing 'components' that *comprise* capacity, is Newmann et. al.'s (2000) framework, which gives five components of capacity to improve student achievement. The framework is not shown in Table 2-5 because it does not focus on levels at which capacity is built. Instead it appears in Table 2-1 because in common with those other frameworks from the private sector and local government, it identifies 'capabilities' or 'components' or 'dimensions' that must be developed in order for capacity to arise. These are:

- Knowledge, skills and dispositions of individual staff members;
- A professional learning community in which staff work collaboratively to set clear goals for student learning, assess how well students are doing, develop action plans to increase student achievement, all the while being engaged in inquiry and problem solving;
- Programme coherence: *"the extent to which the school's programmes for student and staff learning are co-ordinated, focused on clear learning goals, and sustained over a period of time"* (p5); and
- Technical resources – high-quality curriculum, instructional material, assessment instruments, technology, workspace etc; and
- Effective leadership from the headteacher.

Newmann et. al.'s (2000) study was not able to examine the extent to which professional development (focused on these five dimensions of capacity) boosted student achievement *"because of noncomparable trends in student achievement"* (Newmann et al., 2000:260) although cites two studies that do make some links between professional community and improvements in achievement (Lee and Smith, 1996, Louis and Marks, 1998). These are both quantitative studies, the former of which has a major question mark over its findings because these could be otherwise explained. Newmann et al's (2000) five dimensions stem from a synthesis of ideas from research in school improvement. They could be used, therefore, in this study to see whether they are perceived to arise as effects of PPA time.

Second, the notion of 'internal conditions' links to the 'levels' of capacity approach (section 2.6.3; Table 2-5) in the sense that it focuses on the 'entity' level, taking a school-level focus to examine factors that contribute to 'capacity building', but it does not focus on the 'broader system' or 'the individual'. While other research has confirmed importance of external pressure and support as prerequisites of building internal capacity (e.g. Harris, 2001, West, 2000), work carried out with a project called IQEA (Improving the Quality of Education for All) focuses on internal aspects of the school, **because these are what the school has control over**. These internal conditions are defined as *"the internal features of schools*

which build capacity for change and development" (Harris, 2001:262). They *"seem to increase the school's capacity to engage in development initiatives without surrendering to external pressure"* (Hopkins et al., 1994). The six conditions, cited in more recent work too (Ainscow et al., 2000, Hopkins, 2002a, Hopkins, 2002b) are:

- a commitment to staff development;
- practical efforts to involve staff, students and the community in school policies and decisions;
- 'transformational' leadership approaches;
- effective co-ordination strategies;
- proper attention to the potential benefits of enquiry and reflection;
- a commitment to collaborative planning activity.

These conditions are quite specific in that they focus upon what the organisation must *do* to improve. In relation to frameworks in Table 2-1, this framework takes a similar approach, identifying a number of themes, or capabilities, which, if in place, contribute to the development of capacity (for improvement, in this case). In relation to the notion of 'levels' (Table 2-5), these six internal conditions reflect six capabilities at organisational level. This level of study is suitable for this research because, as stated already, these capabilities are what the organisation has control over most strongly. With its focus on individual organisations, this research will not focus on understanding the capacity to improve of the education system as a whole and so, it makes sense that the capacity themes examined would be at organisational level. Neither does this study focus on individual level specifically because although not equal to the sum of the parts, these six capabilities will logically comprise the collective capabilities of individuals.

To provide some background to the study of these 'internal conditions': while a wide range of school improvement projects are in operation worldwide (Harris, 2000), the IQEA Project, from which originated the 'internal conditions' thesis, is one of the more prominent and widely cited school improvement projects in the UK. It is well documented (Ainscow et al., 1994, Hopkins et al., 1994, Hopkins et al., 1996) and has focused on the conditions at school and classroom level that support and sustain improvement, and has involved work over a prolonged period of time (ongoing for over a decade) with over eighty schools, with research being participative in nature. The building of capacity is one of the central principles of this project, which has provided researchers with ideas about those 'conditions' within the school which can be associated with capacity for sustained development and change (Hopkins et al., 1994, Hopkins et al., 1997). Evidence to support these 'conditions' is gleaned through the

literature, through experience and looking for patterns, and generating a questionnaire for staff to test the ideas. Hopkins and Harris, working with the IQEA project state that six internal conditions are *"our best estimate of the conditions that support improvement efforts, and therefore represent the key management arrangements"* (1997:148). As the IQEA work continues, the same set of conditions are still *"associated with a capacity for sustained improvement"* (Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001:469) and Hopkins et al. (1994) believe them to be supported empirically. These internal conditions provide an operational working definition of the *development capacity* of the school (Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001). They are seen as the organisational features or management arrangements of the school, including the frameworks, roles, responsibilities, and ways of working that enable a school *"to get work done"* (Hopkins et al., 1994:104).

This set of six internal conditions has been examined in the context of schools that are working on their own improvement project. In the IQEA project, schools develop their own priorities for development, methods for achieving them, and methods for monitoring such things as enhanced learning outcomes through *"systematic collection and interpretation of school based data"* (Hopkins et al., 1994:152). Hopkins et al. (1994:101) suggest that the particular improvement project will influence the school's priorities, in terms of the conditions on which they will need to focus. Although these six 'internal conditions' have been examined empirically, part of this current study's uniqueness, as defined by Philips and Pugh (2002), arises because the framework has not been studied in the context of a centrally driven policy whose purpose is to build capacity.

Using these internal conditions as a guiding framework to see whether these sorts of conditions are driven by implementation of the policy, it is anticipated that new understandings will arise. The nature of these understandings is not known at this stage. Indeed, social explanation is an inductive process and the question concerning the necessity for a general framework in advance of the research is described by Turner (1980:77) as *"logically peculiar...[as it] seems to rest on the idea that "what is important" can be decided in advance of explanation or apart from it."*.

There is some suggestion that the components (or dimensions / capabilities / conditions) of capacity vary in significance, which opens a gap for further research. Beresford (2003:123), for example, identified the internal condition 'enquiry and reflection' as *"a most powerful classroom condition"*. Fullan (2001b) suggests Newmann et al.'s (2000) framework includes the elements of both *human capital* (in terms of skills) and *social capital* (in terms of 'professional learning communities'), and that individuals' skills can only ever realised in an environment of social relationships. This implies that social capital is a prerequisite of

human capital and so that the components of capacity have some logical order of importance. Fullan (2001b) further priorities 'technical resources' and also 'programme coherence' because of the tendency for complexity in social systems, which he suggests gives rise to the importance of being selective; integrating and coordinating innovations into focused programmes. He then makes a seemingly intuitive, although less well reasoned link between development of these components and excellent *leadership*. The importance of leadership was, as we have seen, one of the key 'internal conditions' given in the IQEA six point model.

Mentioned at the beginning of this section was Stoll's breakdown of the 'influences on internal capacity' into three levels, or dimensions; (individual teachers as learners, the school learning context, and external contextual influences on school capacity). These were shown in the comparison tables of frameworks by various theorists in the preceding section (Table 2-5, Table 2-6, and Table 2-7) because of their focus on the multi-dimensional nature of influences on capacity. Like Van den Berg and Sleegers' (1996) model (Table 2-1), it highlights the importance of contextual factors (each of the influences can be positive, negative, or neutral) to capacity building. Research to date has not, however, addressed how these influences impact upon the dimensions / components of capacity discussed by such models as Newmann et. al.'s (2000) framework, or Hopkins et al.'s (1994) internal conditions framework.

Stoll's work (1999) gives no indication that these influences have been examined empirically, only that her overall argument for the necessity of internal capacity draws from existing research in school effectiveness and school improvement. Neither does she propose these influences have a direct link to measurable standards in the sense of student outcomes or examination results. Stoll (1999) also suggests further research is necessary to determine how the influences interact with one another in terms of importance. Each of Stoll's (1999) influences and their sub-themes are shown in the following diagram, the main outline of which represents the school:

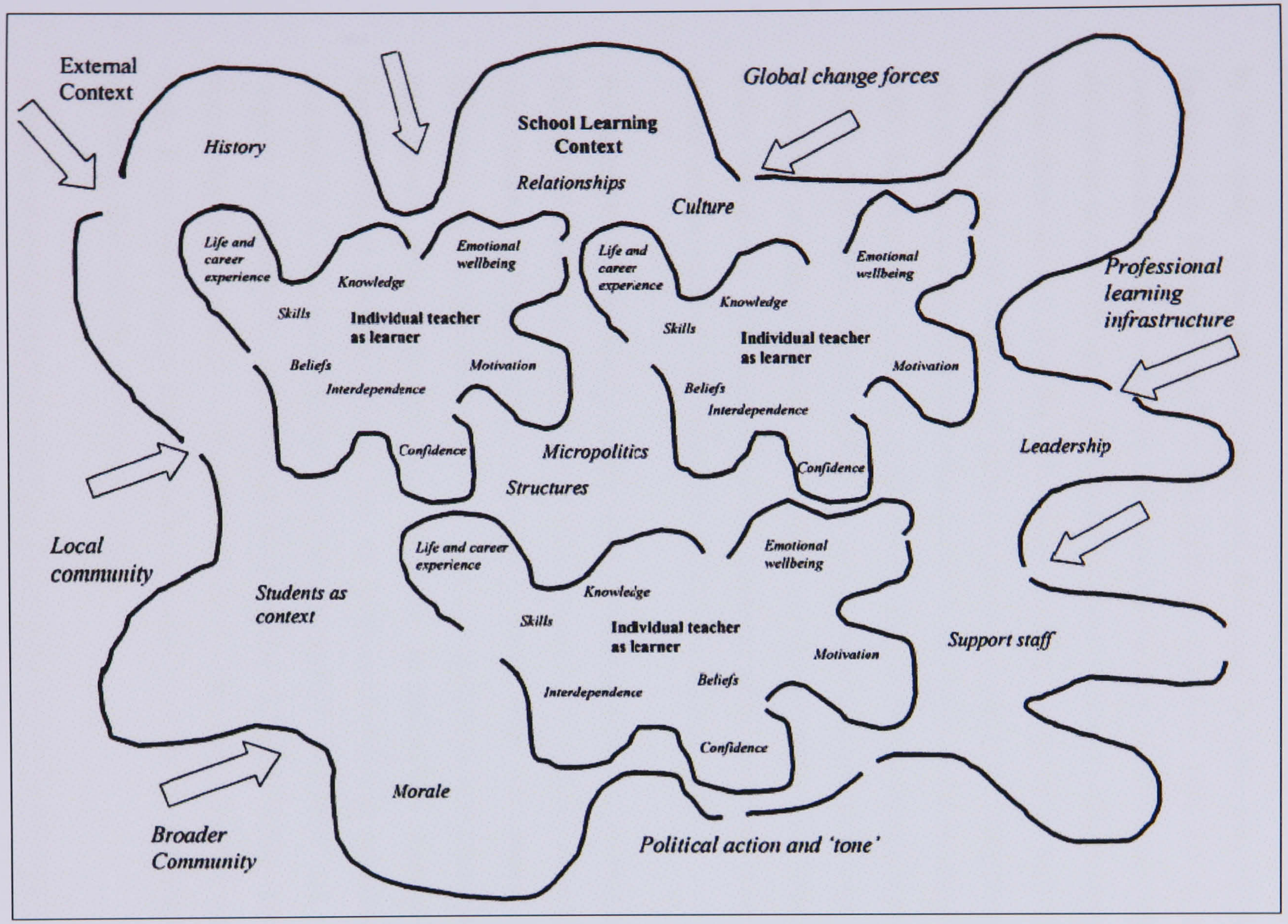

Figure 2-2 Stoll's Influences on internal capacity (1999)

2.9. Summary of key debates

For the purposes of this research, the following section summarises the key debates or confusions around notions of capacity building, and uses a process of informed reasoning to arrive at a series of *possible* understandings of the concepts discussed so far, to be developed by this study. These understandings are developed in order that discussion of empirical findings may be related back to the academic literature. This will facilitate arrival at an overall understanding of capacity and capacity building for this study. The literature review also serves to show the sorts of problems inherent in current understandings. For example, an initial observation is that the area where the body of literature fails to set a convincing definition is in the tendency of writers to generalise and make definitions sufficiently broad and all-encompassing, but fail to be specific in the detail of the meaning of words (Harrow, 2001). In some cases, capacity related terminology is used as though it were self-explanatory (e.g. Laabas, 2000, Dewey, 2005). In others, writers create their own definitions, which causes the concept to become *"so broadly and inconsistently used [that] it loses analytical utility and power."* (Cohen, 1995:408). Understandings resulting from both the literature review and the research will attempt to avoid this common pitfall.

A first point of debate surrounds the value of defining capacity building as an 'end' in itself. Cohen (1995:409), for example, argues for writers in the field to return to a long established and narrower definition, which associates capacity with *"the ability, talent, competency, efficiency and qualifications of people"*. In an organisational context, however, the notion that human centred outcomes can be 'ends' in themselves does not take account of functionality of that organisation, and the purpose of building capacity in relation to that function. It is debatable whether such human centred 'outcomes' are not themselves just 'inputs' to furthering organisational performance through human resources. Under this notion that these capacity 'outcomes' are not in fact outcomes, but means to some other ends, it becomes logical that 'capacity building' is about developing the capacity *to do something*, and isn't the 'something' in itself.

A second area that would benefit from clarification relates to what the *something* discussed above is, i.e. the *objectives* of capacity building. This aspect of the debate will be particularly relevant to the discussion chapter, where understandings of capacity and capacity building will be formed. As discussed in section 2.6.2, notions of an organisation's capacity were seen to relate to its function (Newmann et al., 2000), and, therefore, its overarching aims. Aims were categorised as 'output', and 'support' aims (Gross, 1969). This categorisation is reminiscent of Hadfield et al.'s (2002) divisions of capacity definitions into two camps that

might be referred to as 'output-' and 'input-'type definitions of capacity. In relation to the 'output' categories of both Gross (1969) and Hadfield et al. (2002), the notion of 'sustainable continuous improvement' arose on a number of occasions in the literature (Bollen, 1997, Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001, Hadfield et al., 2002, Hargreaves, 2001, Stoll, 1999, Hopkins et al., 1994, Hopkins et al., 1997, Milèn, 2001, North, 1992, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995, Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, UNDP, 1998, Gunnarsson, 2001) and seems to be a defining aspect of function and goals of capacity, and may also reflect the **purpose** of capacity building.

A third area of confusion relates to operationalisation of 'capacity' and 'capacity building'. A number of theorists attempt to list specific functions or activities that would define 'capacity' (Table 2-1). Others have explored the levels at which capacity building activities take place (Table 2-5). This review has found operationalisations of 'capacity' to be conceptually distinct from operationalisations of 'capacity building', however; and a lack of clarity over which frameworks take which approach in some cases complicates synthesis of understandings. For example, with the frameworks in Table 2-1 there is a fine line between those definitions which specify the activities that contribute to capacity, and those which specify the capacity-related outcomes the organisation would achieve. Newman et al. (2000) and Sanderson (2001), arguably, fit into this latter category. It is also noticeable that while the frameworks in Table 2-1 discuss how capacity is developed (or built) through various activities, 'components', 'dimensions', or 'capabilities', with the exception of the ODPM report (2003) and Honadle (1981) none use the term 'capacity building' explicitly. There needs to be more synthesis between the operationalisations so that the same vocabulary is used to describe the same activity or phenomenon.

A further issue in relation to these frameworks is the extent to which their authors have empirical evidence that these capacity-related themes do in fact enhance an organisation's ability to improve services. This issue will be returned to in 3.2.2, when it is decided which frameworks will be used for this study. The problem in assumptions that capacity for improvement necessarily leads to improvement will also be addressed in the discussion chapter, where the notion of improvement *effort* will be proposed as a means of avoiding this problem.

A fourth knowledge gap relates to the issue of *how* capacity is built through the various 'components' or 'conditions'. There is no suggestion by researchers that these determinants of capacity building have additive effects, although there is suggestion that they vary in importance and bear influence on one another. For example, dimensions of capacity seen as influencing other dimensions were 'leadership' (Fullan, 2001b, Newmann et al., 2000) and

'professional development' (King and Newmann, 2001). Further, the issue of how the *influences* on internal capacity at school level (Stoll, 1999) relate to Hopkins and Harris' (1997) 'internal conditions' is not understood. The relationship between influences also needs empirical examination (Stoll 1999). An exploration of these knowledge gaps could further shed some light on the gap relating to understandings of 'capacity building'. This aspect of the debate will be contributed to in the discussion through empirical analysis of Stoll's (1999) influences; discussed further in the methodology chapter.

In summary, the literature presents a number of ways of operationalising 'capacity' and 'capacity building', suggesting that a range of factors have bearing on the outcomes of capacity building initiatives. While there is no definitive accepted meaning of 'capacity' or 'capacity building', this research begins with the understanding, developed through this review, that 'capacity building' is a process, the desired result of which is 'capacity'. Because the purpose of 'capacity building' is dependent upon organisational context, in order to define either 'capacity' or 'capacity building' definitively, agreement over the function of organisations in which 'capacity' is being 'built' is necessary. This review has suggested that 'sustainable continuous improvement' is arguably one such function, or goal, in public sector organisations.

Finally, the field of Education, in relation to schools in particular, provides some interesting opportunities for exploration of the knowledge gaps discussed in this section. This research will focus particularly on the capacity-related frameworks developed in this field because there has been no examination of how Stoll's (1999) influences on internal capacity relate to one another, or to frameworks such as Newmann et. al (2000), Hopkins and Harris (1997) and others in Table 2-1 that examine the components / dimensions of capacity. Section 3.2.2 of the methodology chapter will expand further on the particular frameworks to be used. Empirical study will pick up on these frameworks, as detailed in the methodology chapter, for discussion in Chapter 11.

2.10. Research aim

Because of the range of understandings of 'capacity' and 'capacity building', definition and clarity of the concepts remains problematic. As laid out in section 1.5, the principal aim of this study is essentially *to develop an understanding of the concepts of 'capacity' and 'capacity building' in the public sector and explore how capacity is built.* It will do this by focusing on the important gaps in knowledge addressed in the previous section, and summarised thus as broad objectives:

- To explore the relationship between context and the capacity themes brought to light, through examination of the deconstruction (interpretation) and reconstruction (implementation) of the PPA policy in schools;
- To contribute to public sector policy and practice by uncovering a clearer understanding of, and relationship between, 'capacity' and 'capacity building' than is currently documented in the body of literature.

As highlighted by the literature review, there are a number of frameworks around capacity (Table 2-1) and capacity building 'themes' (Table 2-5, Table 2-6, and Table 2-7). As PPA time is designed to build capacity (section 1.4), this study will explore both implementation of the policy, and understandings of its purpose and outcomes, to see whether it is perceived to build capacity, whether those capacity themes arise as effects of PPA, and so to deepen understandings of PPA and of capacity building. The process by which the objectives above are transferred into a systematic study will be addressed in the following chapter, which discusses research methodology and methods, ensuring they are aligned to the research aim and objectives.

3. Methodology

This chapter explains why the interpretivist paradigm is most appropriate to the research topic. It relates theoretical frameworks to the research problem, showing how these guide the research. It further outlines research design, data collection methods, and the analysis process. Finally, it discusses potential limitations arising from the set up of the study.

3.1. Philosophical assumptions

In the positivist paradigm, knowledge is thought to accumulate and thereby improve. This research rests on the understanding that the social world is fundamentally different from the natural world, and a different set of assumptions must therefore inform research. Within the social world, social life is defined by the perceptions and interpretations of persons interacting within it, which are affected by one another, and also by context. It follows that these interpretations are also carried by a researcher to the field of research and, provided they are acknowledged, contribute to the understanding of a research problem (McEwan and McEwan, 2003). In terms of the researcher's own views: from an ontological perspective reality is subjective and depends on multiple perspectives of individuals; epistemologically a researcher cannot be independent from that which is being researched. 'Reality' is socially constructed as people attribute meaning and, therefore, epistemologically, knowledge is never objective, but is intersubjective (Radnor, 2002).

The researcher's perspective is defined as 'interpretivist', although other names are given to this paradigm also, including 'ethnographic', 'interactive', 'qualitative', 'naturalistic', 'hermeneutic', or 'phenomenological' (Noblit and Hare, 1988). The table below shows how interpretivism is distinct from positivism, although there is considerable blurring of the two paradigms (Collis and Hussey, 2003):

Mode of engagement	Epistemology	Ontological status of human reality	Example of research question
Positivism	Researcher is independent from that being researched.	Reality is objective and singular, apart from the researcher.	What are the causes of variable X?
Interpretivist	Researcher interacts with that being researched	Reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in a study.	How do people subjectively experience their worlds?

Table 3-1 Assumptions of the two main paradigms (Collis and Hussey, 2003)

Interpretive research seeks explanations for social events based upon the perspectives and experiences of the people under examination. It reveals how context affects the meaning of events, and hence interpretivists are dubious about the prospect of developing positivistic, *"natural science-type theories or laws for social and cultural affairs"* (Noblit and Hare, 1988:12). Indeed, the context-specificity, value-laden nature and sheer complexity of this type of research mitigate against the achievement of one grand, predictive theory, although patterns can provide guidance to practitioners and policymakers (Wallace, 2002).

Determined by the researcher's understanding of what constitutes knowledge, the overarching goal of this research is to develop understandings of a particular concept. Such a goal is firmly in line with the goals of interpretive, qualitative, research, which focuses on ambiguity, complexity, meaning, understanding (Yates, 2004), and shared experience (Denzin, 2001), or *verstehen* (Johnson et al., 2006:132) which entails *"capturing the meanings and interpretations that actors ascribe to phenomena in order to describe and explain their behavior through investigating how they sustain, articulate and share with others these socially constituted everyday realities"*.

The following diagram (Figure 3-2) summarises the 'fit' between philosophical assumptions, approaches, and research design taken by this study.

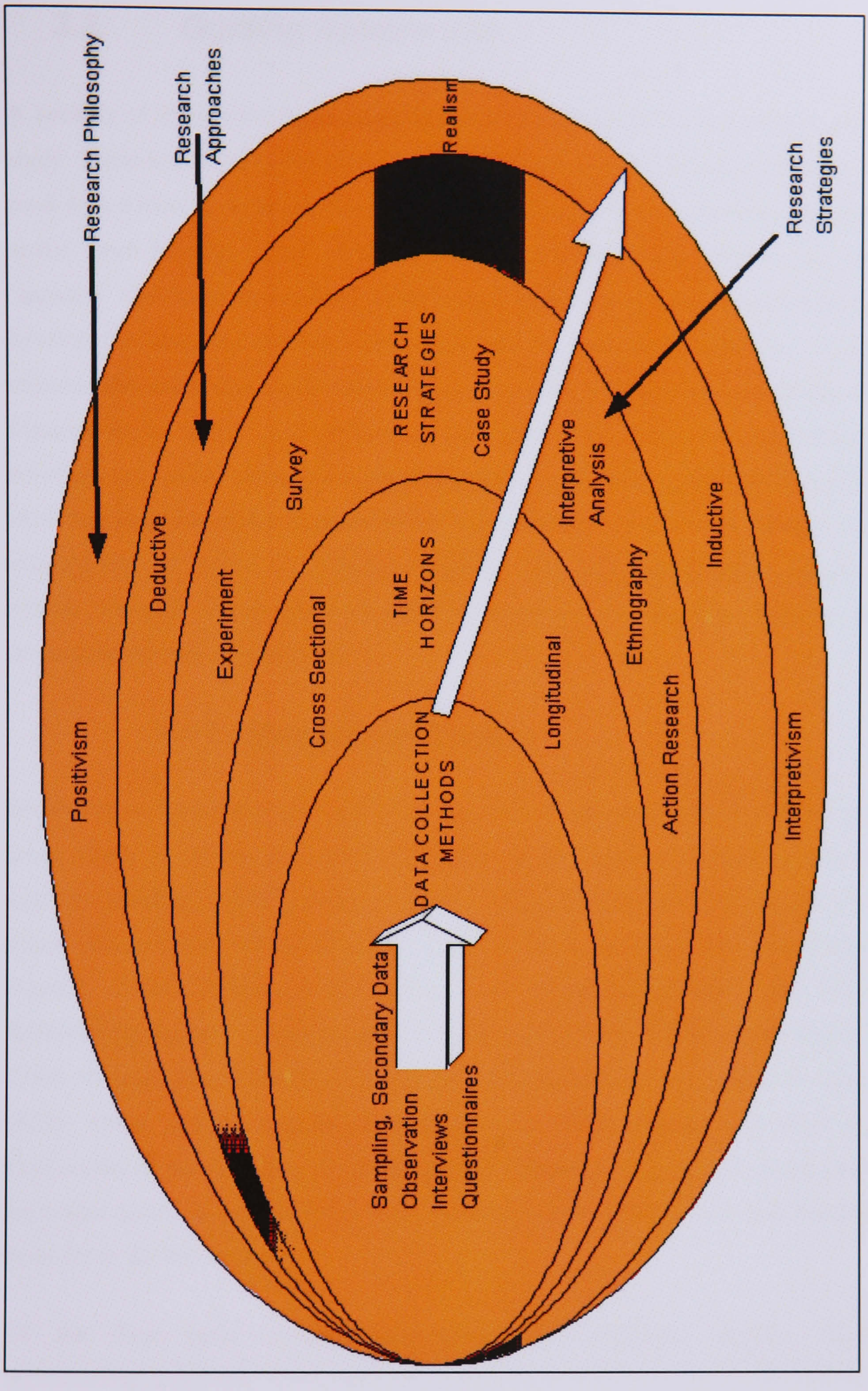

Figure 3-2 The Research Process Onion (Saunders et al., 2003)

3.2. Guiding frameworks

A number of theoretical frameworks found in the literature will be used to guide this study. These are found in the field of school improvement, as will be explained, and are used with a view to widening the context of this study beyond schooling into the public sector more broadly. Aims of this study are twofold: (1) to explore the concepts 'capacity' and 'capacity building', with a view to providing some understanding; (2) to develop the literature relating capacity themes to contextual influences, in order to examine the conditions under which capacity is built. Through use of existing capacity frameworks to guide data collection, this study will focus on examination of a contemporary policy designed to build capacity, in order to cover both research aims: exploring *how* that policy is perceived to build capacity; and through doing this, giving insights into the notion of 'capacity building'. The policy itself serves simply as the vehicle through which understandings of capacity and capacity building can be deconstructed and reconstructed.

3.2.1. Workforce Remodelling

Following on from the literature review, the field of education will be an ideal platform from which to situate this research because of the policy environment that shapes capacity building in this context. Centrally instigated policies currently drive all the major change forces within education at school level, including the 'Transformational Agenda' (DfES, 2005c), whose focus is on school collaboration, the Workforce Remodelling Agenda', and legislation relating to the DfES (2003a) Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' (Harris, 2005). Situating this research within the context of a particular policy whose rhetoric suggests it is designed to build capacity will allow in-depth exploration of the concepts of 'capacity' and 'capacity building'. Focusing on how a particular policy is perceived to build capacity within schools sets and defines clear boundaries for this study.

Of the three main change forces (the Transformational Agenda, Workforce Remodelling, and Every Child Matters), this research will focus on the third phase of the 'Workforce Remodelling Agenda'. This choice reflects a number of considerations that, in short, amount to the notion that if any comparison is to be made between schools, the workforce Remodelling Agenda provides a finite starting point for examination of policy implementation. Considerations are:

1. At the research planning stage the policy is yet to come into statutory force. While a number of 'early adopter' schools have begun implementation of the policy, the majority of schools will not implement it until September 2005, allowing this study to examine the process of implementation (i.e. decision making, influences upon, and effects of), both before, during, and after. Time frames are examined in section 3.5.1.

2. While the policy has significant resource implications, only limited funding is attached to it. In fact, primary schools will be allocated 0.8%-1% on top of their minimum funding level in 2005/06 (DfES, 2005b). In the typical reform process of centralised education systems, this policy has been designed at the 'top', disseminated through regulations and guidelines, to be implemented by schools. The individual school therefore has a significant role to play in strategically mobilising resources from within the community (Chapman et al., 1997) or from within itself. Schools will use a number of different strategies to meet the cover requirement, which may shed light on how capacity is built through implementation of the policy.

3. The statutory nature of the policy ensures that school leaders and managers have the same incentive to interpret and implement policy requirements, and in this sense there is the same potential for capacity building to occur in each school. This allows examination of contextual factors that may cause capacity building to be perceived as happening in some schools, and not in others.

3.2.2. Capacity themes

As highlighted by the literature review, there are a number of frameworks around capacity (Table 2-1) and capacity building 'themes' (Table 2-5, Table 2-6, Table 2-7), at varying levels of conceptualisation and testing. In this section, the most appropriate of these frameworks are compared to arrive at an overall set of themes guiding this research and forming a basis for questioning (see Table 3-2). Of the frameworks examined, the one that has received the most empirical attention is the series of six 'internal conditions' shown to be critical to the development of capacity in schools (Hopkins and Harris, 1997), and laid out in section 2.8. Through investigation and literature reviews, these are said to be *"sufficiently robust as to guide practice and research"* (Hopkins et al., 1997:402). Because of this, these internal conditions will form the basis of the set of themes used by this research.

Of the remaining frameworks examined by the literature review, a good number contribute capacity themes that were not considered by the IQEA framework of six

'internal conditions' (Hopkins and Harris, 1997), and will be considered alongside the IQEA themes in order to expand knowledge in this area. These frameworks are shown together in Table 3-2, where it can be seen that there is some overlap in themes. This research will explore these twelve capacity-related themes empirically. Newmann et al. (2000) develop conceptual frameworks through examination of the literature on school improvement. Their study neither tests for, nor provides, empirical evidence that the themes are a definitive set that improves schools' ability to improve outcomes, however. Ohiorhenuan and Wunker's (1995), and similarly Cohen's (1995) study are based on reviews of the international development capacity building literature and, again, do not provide empirical evidence for the frameworks. ODPM (2003) and UNDP (1998) studies also contribute little empirically in terms of assessing validity of the themes in improving capacity; both developing frameworks from reviews of the capacity building literature in their fields. These studies will be included, however, because of their relevance in terms of their specification of activities that contribute to capacity.

The few remaining frameworks will not be included in this particular aspect of the research for a number of reasons. Some frameworks are too specific in their scope to transfer usefully to the research setting. Zahra and George (2002), and Van den Bosch (2005), for example, focused on the capabilities necessary for absorptive capacity. Finger and Brand (1999), Child and Faulkner (1998), Newman et al. (2000), and Sanderson (2001) focused on capacity-related outcomes sought in relation to capacity to learn, change, or evaluate, rather than to the capabilities that might contribute to capacity for improvement. Although focusing on capabilities that might contribute to capacity, Van den Berg and Sleegers (1996) focused on capacity to innovate. That said, the four components in their model are taken into account in Table 3-2 by other frameworks (see 2.8). Other frameworks address levels of analysis very broadly rather than themes that operationalise capacity building (Paul, 1995, Cohen, 1995, Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, Mitchell and Sackney, 2000). Honadle (1981) operationalised capacity in a way that was too specific to international development.

	Level	Capacity-related 'theme'	Framework				
			(Hopkins and Harris, 1997)	(Newmann et al., 2000)	(Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995)	ODPM (2003)	UNDP (1998)
1	**Individual**	Staff development / skills	✓	✓		✓	✓
2		Human resources			✓		
3	**Entity**	Involvement	✓				
4		Leadership	✓	✓			
5		Co-ordination	✓				
6		Enquiry and reflection	✓				
7		Collaborative planning	✓				
8		Professional learning community		✓			
9		Programme coherence		✓			
10		Physical / technical resources		✓	✓		✓
11		Organisational processes			✓	✓	
12	**System**	External support			✓	✓	

Table 3-2 Twelve key capacity-related 'themes' guiding the research

The remainder of this section briefly identifies what is meant by each of these twelve themes. Appendix 9 links each of these themes to interview questions that will be asked of members of the workforce to develop an understanding of whether PPA is helping to contribute to development of each of these themes. The theme of **staff development / skills** relates to the notion that in order for capacity to arise, the school must show a commitment to staff development (Hopkins et al., 1994) in terms of staff as individuals and as a team. In relation to this study, the sorts of questions that will be asked relate to whether PPA is perceived to help staff develop their skills in areas such as teaching, assessment, and in enabling them to work better to develop one another. Newmann et al. (2000) cited evidence that this theme should be included as one of the capabilities to develop in order for capacity to arise. They suggested schools must improve the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of staff. This related to the ability of teachers to be professionally competent in both teaching and assessment.

The notion of **human resources** as a theme is particularly related to the motivation of individuals, which has bearing on their inputs (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker 1995). Human resources is closely related to staff development, but is particularly addressing the reward / incentive aspect. Another of Hopkins et al.'s (1994) themes is **involvement**; both in terms of pupil involvement, and of parental involvement, which they recognises as significant in school improvement. Questions relating to this will seek to find whether PPA is in any way linked to improvements in this area. **Leadership** was also identified by a number of studies as being a significant capability. From the perspective of Hopkins et al. (1994) this related to empowering of teachers to make decisions. Cohen (1995) also mentions the significance of leadership, in the context of leadership for bringing the right people into the organisation.

The following three themes were all developed through the IQEA research (Hopkins et al. 1994). **Co-ordination** relates to the interpersonal interactions among staff. It is about providing opportunities to share ideas and support one another through formalised working arrangements. **Enquiry and reflection** relates to the ability of staff to recognise and work with their existing strengths, and those of their colleagues. It also relates to the collection and interpretation of school-based data. **Collaborative planning** related to the identification of clear goals for school-wide student learning.

In terms of **professional learning community,** a review by Bolam et al. (2005:5) suggests that although there is no universal definition, *"there appears to be broad international consensus that it suggests a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice..."*. Formation of questions relating to the notion was

carried out using Newmann et al.'s (2000) work, because they link it specifically to the sharing of clear goals for pupil learning; collaboration to achieve these goals; professional inquiry to address challenges; and opportunities to influence the school's activities and polices. Newmann et al. (2000) also give **programme coherence** as a capability necessary for development of capacity. This relates to the extent to which the school's programmes for student and staff learning are co-ordinated, focused on clear learning goals, and sustained over time.

The notion of resources, including **physical / technical resources** such as classroom materials and curriculum (Newmann et al., 2000) and financial resources to deliver objectives (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995, UNDP, 1998) arises as another theme. Two of the studies (ODPM, 2003, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995) also put forward the importance of **organisational processes** which, in the context of PPA, would link particularly to improvements in the planning process. Finally, the significance of **external support** was given as a critical dimension of capacity by Ohiorhenuan and Wunker (1995) and ODPM (2003). This related to eliciting the support and commitment of significant outsiders for the goals of the organisation, and to the development and strengthening of external links. This study will explore perceptions of PPA to see if these twelve themes arise as effects of PPA, which will serve to contribute to understanding how capacity is built and what it means to build capacity.

3.2.3. *'Influences on internal capacity'*

The framework that will provide a lens for examining the twelve capacity themes is Stoll's (1999:506) 'influences on internal capacity' (see Table 2-5), which *"influence the school's readiness for change"*. These influences are used in this study because they take into account the broad range of possible influences upon internal capacity; broader than Sanderson's (2001) notion of the 'supportive infrastructure' required for development of capacity for improvement (section 2.4). Sanderson (2001) examined only systems and processes, which would fall under Stoll's 'structures', and perhaps 'leadership'. Under Stoll's framework, the range of influences upon internal capacity acting upon a school fall into three dimensional categories, shown (with their sub themes) in Table 3-3. According to Stoll's (1999:515) framework, *"the various influences at the three levels can be positive, neutral, or negative"*.

Influence dimension	Sub-theme
The individual teachers as learners	Life and career experiences
	Beliefs
	Emotional wellbeing
	Knowledge
	Skills
	Motivation to learn
	Confidence that (s)he can make a real difference
	Sense of interdependence
The school learning context	The particular mix of pupils
	Relationships between teachers
	Morale
	History
	Culture
	Power issues
	Support staff
	Structures
	Leadership
The external contextual influences on internal capacity	The local community
	The broader community
	Political action and tone
	Professional learning infrastructure
	Global change forces

Table 3-3 Stoll's (1999) framework: influences on internal capacity

This study will contribute new knowledge by linking two pieces of theory that have not previously been examined together, and particularly not within the context of a centrally driven policy aimed at capacity building. It will relate the 'influences' on internal capacity to the internal conditions (operationalised for this study as the twelve 'themes') with a view to exploring the relationship between capacity building and organisational context. For example, one of Stoll's (1999) school-level influences is 'structures', which for this study will include the way the PPA policy is implemented uniquely in each school. This study will use stakeholder perceptions to relate influence factors, such as those contextual policy implementation decisions, to the twelve capacity related themes (Table 3-2) to see *how* capacity is built dependent upon context. Analysis of data will allow examination of the full range of contextual factors perceived to influence PPA's effects in terms of those twelve 'themes'.

3.2.4. Notions of capacity

Finally, Hadfield et al.'s (2002) observation that theoretical distinctions in Education tend to distinguish between the notions of capacity as:

- a general ability or potential of a school to improve pupil outcomes, manage and learn from change, and sustain their own development. (The school's capacity *to do something*).
- the types of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and relationships required of individuals and teams with a school that underpin its development. (Individual and team capacities *for certain things*).

forms a framework for examining perceptions of the perceived outcomes of PPA. Questions will be framed around these ideas to explore how respondents relate PPA to capacity. Comparing answers to these questions with answers to direct questioning on whether PPA builds capacity for improvement, and on the capacity-related effects of PPA will allow some triangulation to what PPA is about and whether it is about capacity building (and this is addressed in discussion section 11.1).

3.3. Focused research questions

At the outset, this research laid out the overall aim *to "conduct a study in order to develop an understanding of the concepts of 'capacity' and 'capacity building' in the public sector, and to explore how capacity is built"* (section 1.5). Knowledge uncovered in the literature review meant broad objectives were laid out in section 2.10. Following on from the summary of key debates in section 2.9, and from discussions of frameworks that will be used to guide this research and the way in which these contribute to knowledge in section 3.2, Table 3-4 focuses these into clear and specific objectives for this research. Through examining the deconstruction (interpretation) and reconstruction (implementation) of the PPA policy by members of the workforce this study will explore the following objectives and resulting research questions, which will provide a basis for case study analysis and which will be returned to in the discussion chapter:

	Research Objective is to find…	Research Question
1	How capacity is built through contextually unique decisions made in the implementation process, i.e. the conditions under which capacity building might be maximised	*How do implementation factors affect the 12 capacity 'themes'?*
2	How contextual factors ('influences') relate to PPA's effects (capacity 'themes' perceived to arise from PPA)	*How do other contextual 'influences' relate to capacity 'themes'?*
3	How contextual factors ('influences') are perceived in terms of comparative importance	*How do influences compare in terms of impact on the 12 'themes'?*
4	The relationship between whether PPA (designed to build capacity) is perceived to give rise to the capacity 'themes' arising from existing frameworks, and whether PPA is perceived to build capacity	*How do the 12 capacity 'themes' relate to whether PPA is perceived to build capacity? So how appropriate are they as indicators of capacity?*
5	How contextual factors affect perceptions of the importance of the various capacity related 'themes' for contributing to school improvement	*How does context affect importance of the 12 capacity 'themes' for contributing to school improvement?*
6	How perceptions of what 'capacity building' is relate to current understandings, and can be used to contribute to notions of 'capacity building'	*How can 'capacity' and 'capacity building' be understood?*

Table 3-4 Research objectives and research questions shaping this study

3.4. Research design

The research design for this study complies with the principles of an interpretive perspective, and the resulting series of "how" questions. A case study design allows study of a contemporary phenomenon (in this case, the implementation of a particular policy) within its real-life context. When contextual conditions are thought to be *"highly pertinent to [the] phenomenon of study"* (Yin, 1994:13) a case study design is the preferred method (Yin, 1994).

The case study enquiry is a comprehensive strategy that allows the researcher to focus on a number of variables, to use multiple sources of evidence, and to use predefined theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. As a qualitative approach in the paradigmatic sense, the case study is seen as an alternative approach to ethnography, naturalistic inquiry, or life history methodologies (McEwan and McEwan, 2003). It is particularly suited to this research because *"[each case study] is an extensive examination of a single instance of a phenomenon of interest...[carried out] with a view to obtaining in-depth knowledge"* (Collis and Hussey, 2003:68). The 'case' or 'unit of analysis' in the case of this research is *the implementation of PPA time in the context of a particular school.*

Three types of case study may be conducted, dependent upon the sorts of research questions posed. These are 'exploratory', 'explanatory', and 'descriptive' (Yin, 1994, Collis and Hussey, 2003) The principal aim of this study is to understand (a) how the concepts 'capacity', and 'capacity building' are understood and (b) how capacity is built. The primary purpose of this study is, therefore, to 'explore' the concepts and develop ideas rather than to develop hypotheses or to 'describe' or 'explain' what is happening and why. In 'exploring', this study will look for hypotheses rather than testing or confirming a hypothesis, which would be more characteristic of a positivistic study (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

In terms of criteria for evaluating this qualitative study, establishing its truth value will require a slightly different set of criteria from that which is appropriate for positivistic research. In particular, notions of generalisability and objectivity are not features of qualitative inquiry, whose axiological assumptions and methodological approaches oppose such goals. Lincoln and Guba's seminal work in the 1980s (including Lincoln and Guba, 1985) substituted 'reliability' and 'validity' with the concept of 'trustworthiness', containing four aspects: 'credibility', 'transferability', 'dependability', and 'confirmability'. Although Lincoln (1995:276) now understands these criteria to be

rested in assumptions developed from a positivist view of research, she advocates their use as a reminder that *"interpretivist inquiry requires as serious a consideration of systematic, thorough, conscious method as does empiricist inquiry"*.

Morse et al. (2002) argue that these sorts of criteria have led to an emphasis on evaluation of trustworthiness by the reader over strategies implemented during the research process. The notion that the reader must find a level of moral certainty that what is written offers a faithful representation of the 'truth' (McEwan and McEwan, 2003:83) takes responsibility away from the researcher and even marginalises qualitative inquiry. Notions of reliability and validity remain common evaluative criteria in many qualitative studies (Morse et al., 2002). Validity relates to *"whether the data collected is a true picture of what is being studied"*(Collis and Hussey, 2003:186); reliability to whether a repeat of the study would obtain the same results. In order to *ensure* reliability and validity and not just *evaluate* truth value post hoc this study will use verification strategies throughout the course of data collection. A number of mechanisms will be woven into the study to ensure a solid inquiry:

- Methodological coherence will ensure a fit between questions, methods, data, and analytic procedures.
- Thorough preparation and piloting of interview schedules will ensure the same questions are posed to respondents, in the same manner. Questions will be sufficiently explicit to minimise clarification sought by respondents, allowing minimal variation in input from researcher.
- Concurrent collection and analysis of data will direct the research towards what is still unknown, ensuring research serves its purpose.
- Initial interview 'coding' will be based heavily on an 'autocode' process that is consistent across all interviews.
- Transcripts of interviews with headteachers will be emailed to them for their approval. For practical reasons this will not be done for each of the teachers.
- An amended version and each case study chapter, with language and explanation targeted at practitioners, will be sent to headteachers for them to read and make available for all participating teachers. They will be asked to confirm whether the report is a true and fair reflection of the situation at their school, thus validating reports.
- Multiple data sources and their triangulation will be designed into the process.
- Arrival at a cross-case analysis will be an iterative process that involves cross-checking and re-checking of interpretive statements in the case chapters that will

be developed through a rigorous process data chunking. This will ensure consistency in interpretation between cases, and consistency between the analytic statements in each case, tables summarising data, and data tables in the cross-case chapter.

3.5. Data collection methods

Collis and Hussey (2003:69) conceptualise the case study design as a series of stages: case selection, preliminary investigations, data collection, analysis, and reporting. This section examines the each of these stages to describe how the study will take place and the data used in writing it up.

3.5.1. Case selection

This section discusses the number and nature of cases to provide the setting for this study. Because of the nature of this study in investigating a particular phenomena (the implementation of PPA time) in order to explore the notion of 'capacity building', a multiple case study approach is proposed, to provide greater analytical power. This approach moves beyond ethnographic description of an individual case in order to develop more sophisticated descriptions and explanations. Multiple cases help the researcher to *"pin down the specific conditions under which a finding will occur"* (Miles and Huberman, 1994) by exploring processes and outcomes across those cases. Systematic comparison allows cross-case conclusions to be drawn (Noblit and Hare, 1988).

The research will be carried out in UK-based education institutions. To ensure the research is viable and feasible the sample set will be limited to schools with Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, served by the Worcestershire Local Authority. Above Key Stages 1 and 2, schools have traditionally allocated time to teachers for planning, and therefore the most marked, research-worthy changes will arise at Key Stage 1 and 2. This covers pupils from Years 1 to 6 (age 5 – 11).

In selecting a set of cases to study, it is not necessary to select a representative case or set of cases with a view to statistical generalisation. In order that analysis may give rise to some level of theoretical generalisations, however, and at least across the particular Local Authority in question, the school set chosen will represent a variety of school types at Key Stage 1 and 2, based on factors including size, inspection ratings, funding, and socio-economic status of the intake. Six schools to be chosen during discussions

with the Inspector will represent a variety of sizes, stages in the Remodelling process, and intake backgrounds spread widely across the county. The author of this research report is currently a school governor (sitting on the Learning & Teaching committee, and with specific responsibility for monitoring Assessment for Learning, PPA Time, and performance management of the headteacher) at Underwood. Schools are shown in the following table:

School	School Years	Size (number of forms in year)	Stage in Remodelling Process	Short description
Barfields Primary	R-6	½ form entry	Early adopter of PPA. Fully implemented	Small rural school. Oversubscribed. High SEN. An effective school.
Hall Gardens Primary	R-6	1 form entry	Not implemented	On the edge of a city, serving a council estate. Shrinking size. High SEN. Was in Special Measures. Below average attainment but improving.
Meadows First	R-4	2 form entry	Early adopter of PPA. Have started to use TAs to cover classes	Broad backgrounds. Average SEN. Very effective school.
The Orchard Primary	R-6	2 form entry	Early adopter of PPA. Fully implemented	Moderately advantaged backgrounds. Below average SEN. Very good school, striving for excellence.
Underwood First	R-4	½ form entry	Not implemented	Village school. Better than average backgrounds. Below average SEN. A rapidly improving school.
Westfields First	R-4	2 form entry	Not implemented	On the edge of a city. Socially diverse intake. Below average SEN. An effective school.

Table 3-5 Variations in schools under study

In terms of timescale, data collection will take place over a one year period to account for changing perceptions and allow time for implementation to settle. The main body of

data collection is to coincide with the academic year 2005/06 when the policy comes into statutory force. To pick up changes in perception and practice over the course of the year each school will be visited in three blocks for data collection as shown, with the final headteacher interviews being conducted a year after preliminary interviews with them:

Interview participants	**Timescale**
Headteachers and Local Authority	2004/05 Term 3
Teachers	2005/06 Term 1
Teachers	2005/06 Term 3
Headteachers and National Remodelling Team	2005/06 Term 3

Table 3-6 Timescale for interview process.

3.5.2. Preliminary investigations

An initial pilot study will involve a number of exploratory investigations:

- preliminary interview with a local headteacher to discuss issues surrounding implementation of PPA time;
- preliminary interview with Local Authority County inspector responsible for coordinating PPA training at primary level to discuss Local Authority interest in the research and its funding. Also to gauge attitudes towards, problems with, and approaches to dealing with, implementation of PPA. Also to discuss making contact with six schools;
- attendance at a PPA training meeting for headteachers held by the Local Authority;
- pilot interview with a teacher to test out interview questions for clarity and responses expected;
- in-depth interviews with the six headteachers at schools considered for the research to confirm willingness and suitability of the participants, and to assess school environment and staffing structure. Analysis of these interviews will also contribute to the planning of Round 1 interviews (see Timescale Table 3-6) and will be used as evidence in ongoing analysis.

3.5.3. Data collection

3.5.3.1. Range of sources

Case study research is not synonymous with qualitative research methods, and it can include a mixed methods approach. Yin (1994) suggests a number of categories of data source, including documents, interviews, and observations. Indeed, one of the benefits of case study research is that it allows researchers to deal with a range of sources of evidence, lending itself to *"further confidence that we've really understood what has been going on"* (Miles and Huberman, 1994:10). Mixed method approaches further allow data triangulation, and increase credibility by reducing the risk that the research will jump to conclusions based on insubstantial evidence (McEwan and McEwan, 2003). This research will, therefore, adopt a mixed-method approach to data collection. This study will utilise the following combination of methods:

- individual, semi-structured, recorded interviews with teachers, headteachers, an LA representative, and a National Remodelling Team representative;
- observation of teachers in their classroom environment, and of headteachers at training meetings;
- a survey as used by researchers in the IQEA project to determine stakeholder perceptions of current 'internal conditions';
- a diary study examining teachers' own allocation of times to PPA activities, and the conditions under which work was conducted;
- documents, including school documents (organisation charts), government documents (e.g. online information pertaining to PPA time, teachers' pay and conditions, websites such as the National Remodelling Team, OfSTED reports).

Similar doctoral research has been carried out by Brown, with method closely resembling that which this research proposes to adopt. Further details are given in Brown's (2005) study of the implementation of Performance Management in Primary schools.

3.5.3.2. Participants

While this study acknowledges the potential input of other stakeholders at interview, particularly those providing cover and other support staff, interviews will be restricted to headteachers and teachers for this research as they are the direct recipients of PPA and qualified to discuss the sorts of effects PPA has.

In the tradition of qualitative research, participant teachers will be chosen for their relevance to the study, (Creswell, 1994), and willingness to participate. The number of participants, and thus the actual length of time spent in the school, will be dependent on the number of teachers being interviewed; roughly relative to the size of the school. Half of the teachers at each school will be interviewed, with a minimum of four teachers, to gauge a rich range of attitudes. An example of the timetable that will run at a school which has eight teachers is shown in Appendix 5. In summary, 73 interviews will carried out in schools; 61 as shown in the table below, with a total of 34 teachers, plus one interview with a floating teacher, and eleven with heads not shown below. Beyond this, an interview will be carried out with a Local Authority County Inspector, and a member of the National Remodelling Team.

School	Pool of teachers	Number observed and interviewed (not including head)	Proportion interviewed / %	Total interviews carried out in each year group (NB. most teachers remained with one year group, and did two interviews over the year)						
				R	1	2	3	4	5	6
Barfields	8	4	50	2		2	(head x2)		3	
Hall Garden	9	5	55		2	2	2	1	1	1
Meadows	8	5	50	2	6		2			
The Orchard	21	10	48	4	2	2	2	3	2	1
Underwood	5	5	100	2		2	3			
Westfields	13	5	38	2	2	2	4			

Table 3-7 Numbers and proportions of teachers interviewed at each school

3.5.3.3. The semi structured interview

The semi-structured interview is the main tool used to collect data for interpretive analysis (Radnor, 2005). Data generated will be both rich and subjective, arising from the tool used, and analysis will be inductive in order to generate interpretation and theory. In the tradition of phenomenological research, this study will utilise

predominantly qualitative data collected from small samples in their natural settings. The interview process will involve one-to-one semi-structured interviews with teachers, headteachers, a Local Authority representative, and a representative from within the National Remodelling Team. An initial pilot interview with a teacher unrelated to the six schools will be used to gauge suitability and clarity of the questions to respondents. During interviews, notes will be taken and a digital voice recorder will be used to capture data in order that it might be transcribed for analysis. School-based interview participants are shown in the table above (Table 3-7).

Interview schedules are given in Appendix 6. Initial interview questions will be designed to illicit information about the school context, the role of the particular staff member, and the strategies used to implement PPA within each context. Respondents will be asked for their perceptions about the both purpose of PPA time, and its likely outcomes in a broad sense. A long series of questions (see Appendix 9) will find perceived effects of PPA at each school. These questions will relate to the 12 capacity themes this research examines. Respondents will also be asked how important each of these effects is for improvement at their school. This will allow comparison of the 'effectiveness' of PPA time at providing useful improvement.

3.5.3.4. The School Conditions Survey

It is crucial to locate what is observed about schools and what teachers and headteachers say about their practice in the context of the views of significant others (Brown and Rutherford, 1998). With this in mind, the School Conditions Survey (Ainscow et al., 1995) will be administered to a range of stakeholders to determine the extent to which the six 'internal conditions' (developing staff, involvement, leadership, co-ordination, reflection, and collaborative planning) are perceived to be present in the six schools. This survey has been used by researchers in a number of educational settings for this purpose. A modified version of this survey – based on (Ainscow et al., 1995) and where this is ambiguous, on Hopkins et al. (1994) - which takes the form of a Likert-type attitude scale, will be drawn up and administered to all teaching staff, support staff, senior management and governors of the schools (see Appendix 2). Past research has not included the opinions of school governors in this survey, so their inclusion will make an interesting contribution. Results of the survey will demonstrate the conditions of the schools as currently perceived and will provide a means of triangulation with the observations and interviews.

To ensure a good rate of feedback for the surveys, headteachers will be asked to administer surveys during staff and governing body meetings. Response rates are shown in Table 3-9 (section 3.5.5.2), which discusses analysis of the surveys.

3.5.3.5. The observations

The classroom observation follows the same principles as an ethnographic study, albeit significantly less in-depth, as it guides and informs all subsequent data gathering. In Round 1 and Round 2 data collection blocks, each teacher to be interviewed will be observed for a period of one morning in their own classroom setting. This will familiarise the researcher with the respondent, and vice versa. It will allow the researcher to deepen her understanding of the world of the research participants, which is the purpose of interpretive research. Classroom diagrams will be drawn to aid memory of each teacher. An example is shown in

3.5.3.6. The diary study

After Round 1 interviews, each teacher will be given a PPA log. This will be a simple weekly form for completion over an eight week period. Through a series of tick boxes, this form (see Appendix 4) will document weekly data including:

- whether PPA time was received
- how much PPA was received
- how PPA was divided up
- activities carried out
- people worked with
- why these people were worked with
- additional comments

This approach, while incurring minimal demands on teachers' time, seeks to capture both a record of actual practice, and changing (or otherwise) perceptions of PPA over the course of the study. This also serves to reduce reliance on intentions, by gauging actual activities as well. Response rates are shown in Table 3-10 (section 3.5.5.6), which discusses analysis of teachers' time use. Appendix 4 shows both a blank and a completed diary study, with names changed in the latter to protect anonymity.

3.5.3.7. The documents

An array of documents were used to collect, or verify, information. Some that provided more general information are outlined here, while others are mentioned in the appropriate sections of 3.4.5. 'Reporting':

- School Achievement and Attainment Tables for each school (DfES, 2004a, DfES, 2005a)
- Inspection reports for each school (OfSTED, 2004a, OfSTED, 2005b, OfSTED, 2004d, OfSTED, 2004c, OfSTED, 2005a, OfSTED, 2004b)
- School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, and Guidance accompanying the Section 133 Regulations issued under the Education Act 2002, which informs schools of the regulations involved when employing HLTAs as cover (DfES, 2004c)
- Organisation charts were used in combination with headteacher interviews to work out staffing numbers

3.5.4. Data analysis

In line with the interpretive approach adopted, this study uses the principles behind Radnor's (2002) six stage approach to prepare the semi-structured interviews for analysis, and to interpret data, in order to answer the research questions. The approach ensures a highly rigorous and logical process of coding data, providing a clear audit trail back to the data. The approach takes the following steps:

1. Topic ordering.
2. Constructing categories.
3. Reading for content.
4. Completing the coded sheets.
5. Generating coded transcripts.
6. Analysis to interpreting the data

Administration of the process is greatly simplified by using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software package, which negates the need for stages 4 and 5. The following table outlines the approach to preparation of the interview data for analysis, in order that the process might be clear and transparent to the reader:

Data preparation stage	Action to be taken
Topic ordering	Interview transcripts will be typed up in standard format so that questions are consistently in MS Word 'heading 1' style. Transcripts will be imported into NVivo, assigned an identifying number, organized into folders according to which round of interviews they fall into, and then into 'teacher' or 'headteacher' subfolders to allow running of 'queries' in the analysis stage. The 'autocode' function will be run on all transcripts so that the question numbers become a series of 'nodes'. When each node is opened, all responses relating to the question represented by that node are displayed. Nodes will be given an identifying name. This will form the backbone of the coding system.
Reading the transcripts	This important stage will bring the researcher very close to the data and allow transcriptions to be checked for accuracy. Transcriptions are read through while simultaneously listening to audio recordings, and comparing also with written notes and documents (see 3.5.5.1) for documents used).
Constructing categories	Upon reading each transcript through, further 'nodes' will be created manually. These will reflect emergent topics embedded implicitly within responses. There will be a great number of these. Within many of these, coding will be broken down further to a number of levels (an illustrated example of this is shown later in Figure 10-6, which shows the themes and sub-themes relating to the notion of 'capacity for improvement')
Coding	Simultaneously with the previous stage, where nodes relating to emergent topics were created, each transcript will be coded manually so that chunks of data from within it are assigned to the appropriate node. The same data chunk can be coded to multiple nodes.

Table 3-8 Preparing data for analysis in NVivo software

The final stage of the process is interpretation of data. Interpretation is closely bound up with the next stage: 'reporting', because the two are simultaneous processes. Each case study will be written up in a standard way, as laid out in the following section on reporting (3.5.5). Most sections of case studies will make use of interview data, although

not all. Where information is taken from the interviews, interpretation of data is required. To do this, the relevant data will be located, typically through running an 'advanced coding query', which brings up data fitting more than one criteria. For example, the researcher may wish to see all quotations both coded to a particular node, *and* with a particular 'attribute' (e.g. it is from a headteacher / a particular school / a part-time teacher / a female teacher). The quotations on display are read and interpreted by the researcher, who looks for patterns in the data, or ways of understanding it. Analytical statements made in the case studies are backed up by use of quotations.

3.5.5. Reporting

This section explains the sources of information used in the following six case studies, and is set out using the same headings. It addresses both primary empirical data sources, including the interviews, diary studies, and survey; as well as secondary data sources, such as government reports. Data relating to school statistics will reflect information current during the fieldwork period.

3.5.5.1. School pupil context

Information about the characteristics of each school will be gleaned from four main sources:

- Performance data and statistics for Primary schools will be taken from the DfES' (2005a) records of school achievement and attainment at each school. Data will reflect the results for the academic year 2004/05, in which this research is to begin.
- Average performance data and statistics are taken from a 2005 PANDA (Performance and Assessment) report, to which this research gained access, and which reflect 2005 data validated by OfSTED.
- The latest OfSTED reports, which range from 2004 to 2006 will be examined.
- Headteachers will be asked to describe the context of their school, including such areas as its size and number of pupils, teachers and teaching assistants; the background of pupils and geographical areas feeding the school; the governance arrangements and management structure; and the 'ethos' and environment of the school. Further information on these areas will also be taken from comments made in subsequent teacher interviews. The data to be used in research analysis is described in the following sections.

3.5.5.2. School Conditions

Relating to Hopkins and Harris' (1997) notion of 'internal conditions', which is one of the guiding frameworks of this research (see section 3.2.2) a stakeholder survey (see Appendix 2) will be used to examine perceptions of each school at the outset of the fieldwork period. Key areas of schools that stakeholders will be asked to give opinion on are 'developing staff', 'involvement', 'reflection', 'leadership', 'co-ordination', and 'collaboration'. Surveys will be used to show the extent to which these six 'internal conditions' (Hopkins et al., 1994:112) are present in each school. This will provide some initial evidence of how the schools are currently perceived, putting any changes in opinion over the course of the year, into context.

Stakeholder survey responses will be given in the form: *"this rarely happens at our school"*, *"this sometimes happens"*, *"this often happens"*, or *"this nearly always happens"*. Responses will be inputted into an MS Excel spreadsheet and a chart plotted for each school to show the range of opinions. Because of the nature of this research this information will not be used statistically, but serves to provide a visual picture of *general* trends, indicating areas in which the school is perceived to be strong or weak.

A total of 126 surveys were completed. The chart below shows the number of each type of stakeholder responding at each of the six schools, and the proportion of the potential respondent population that this represented. As an example, 17 surveys were completed at school 1 (n=17). Nine of these were completed by support staff, which represented 64% of the school's support staff.

	School 1 (n=17)	School 2 (n=11)	School 3 (n=30)	School 4 (n=27)	School 5 (n=14)	School 6 (n=27)
support staff	9 (64%)	2 (11%)	10 (53%)	9 (20%)	2 (40%)	4 (12%)
teachers	6 (75%)	6 (67%)	8 (100%)	8 (38%)	4 (100%)	13 (100%)
senior managers	1 (100%)	1 (20%)	3 (100%)	3 (50%)	1 (100%)	4 (100%)
school governors	1 (8%)	2 (13%)	9 (60%)	7 (50%)	7 (70%)	6 (50%)

Table 3-9 Respondents from each stakeholder group at each school

3.5.5.3. Interviewees

73 interviews will be carried out (as shown in Table 3-7, section 3.5.3.2). Data pertaining to role of teachers will be gained during the interview process and witnessed

in the observation process, in which each of the 33 teachers will be observed in their classroom environment for a lesson.

3.5.5.4. Approach to PPA (strategy)

Information pertaining to the strategies which each school adopted will be obtained through the interview process with both heads and teachers.

3.5.5.5. Perceived purpose and outcomes of PPA time

Interviewees will be asked to give their perceptions of PPA's purpose. This will allow for discussion of the links between perceived purpose, strategies used to implement PPA, and notions of capacity, at a later stage. The reason this information will be sought is because it is considered prudent to examine workforce perceptions of the purpose of PPA before examining perceived outcomes / effects, as the former may colour the latter.

A guiding framework in this research (see section 3.2.4) is Hadfield et al.'s (2002) observation that theoretical distinctions in Education tend to distinguish between the notions of capacity as (a) the school's capacity to do something, and (b) individual and team capacities for certain things. This forms a framework for examining perceptions of the perceived outcomes of PPA. Questions will be framed around these ideas to explore how respondents relate PPA to capacity. In terms of its outcomes, they will be asked to comment on whether the following were 'very likely', 'likely', 'possible', or 'unlikely', to arise from PPA time:

- The school is better able to sustain improvement
- The school is better able to manage change
- Pupil learning and their outcomes are better
- Teachers become better at being flexible/open/reflective
- Something else

the latter point being included to allow for development of alternative definitions of capacity. The question will be phrased this way to (a) avoid non-committal answers commonly found in the pilot interviews, (b) reduce bias in researcher ranking of outcome likelihood, and (c) allow a clearer comparison of responses. Responses in terms of both outcome and purpose will be inputted into an MS Excel table. Twelve tables will be created: two for each school; with one for each round of interviewing, to allow for changes in response. Appendix 8 shows an example table for school 1; round 2. It can be

seen how responses are plotted and interpreted to show the sorts of responses at each school.

3.5.5.6. Use of time

Information about teachers' use of time will be taken from the interviews and from a diary study. Initial interviews with headteachers highlighted that named activities are open to subjective interpretation. With this in mind interviewees will be asked to define the various activities constituting PPA time at first round interviews in order to prevent researcher assumptions on what constitutes 'assessment', for example.

The diary study will allow quantification of times spent on planning, preparation, and assessment in order to give the reader a means for comparison. Such use of the data takes example from Brown and Rutherford's (1998) approach to phenomenological research, which included quantifying times teachers spent teaching. Analysis of diary studies will be carried out using the MS Excel spreadsheet programme. Appendix 7 gives a summary of diary study analysis. From the table below it can be seen that the majority of diaries were not completed. At Hall Garden, for example, only one of five participating teachers completed a diary. This took place during round one, and four weeks worth of diaries were kept by the teacher, as highlighted in yellow.

Total staff given diaries at each school (round 1, round 2)	Round 1 (8 weeks worth of diary studies given)								Round 2 (4 weeks worth of diary studies given)				Total return rate
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	
Barfields (5,4)					3								27%
Hall Garden (6,6)				1									6%
Meadows (5,5)		1				1		3				3	73%
The Orchard (9,8)				1		1	3	2		1		1	51%
Underwood (4,4)				1								1	17%
Westfields (5,5)	5				1								17%

Table 3-10 Number of teachers carrying out diary studies

Triangulation of interview and diary data may find contradictions. These should be viewed from the understanding that interviews will be carried out in advance of the diary

studies, and many comments will represent past patterns of behaviour and may only be speculative about future patterns.

3.5.5.7. Influences on the effects of PPA time

Stoll's (1999) framework provides the basis for examining the factors considered to influence PPA's implementation and effects. Her influences are broadly categorised as 'external', 'school', and 'teacher'. Teachers will not be questioned directly on these influences (although headteachers will initially), but their perceptions will be induced from the transcripts. Perceptions on those influences will emerge as they discuss the likely effects of PPA. These will be coded to 'nodes' within the qualitative data analysis package NVivo. This method allows for emergent themes not accounted for in Stoll's framework. For example, at Barfields one teacher answers the question of whether or not PPA is likely to have a positive effect on the capacity theme 'developing staff'. She suggests that the opportunity afforded by PPA for taking time out of the classroom is enhanced by the school's own flexible culture, saying that *"Because the doors are open we could maybe just pop in and say "do you think I could do this?""* (Gwen, Barfields - Round 1). This statement is coded, therefore, to the node relating to the school-level influence 'culture', as well as to the node relating to the effect 'developing staff' in NVivo. This methodology allows for linkages to be made between Stoll's (1999) influences, and the 12 capacity themes.

As well as this emergent approach, headteachers will be questioned directly and asked to give some examples of those factors, contextual to their school, that they consider to have influenced PPA's effects. Some of the influences will, themselves, be affected by other factors. For example, while lack of funding may be an influence, this may itself be influenced by the size of the school. These themes will, again, be emergent from the coding process.

3.5.5.8. Effects of PPA time

A series of frameworks concerning the capabilities that create capacity, and which organisations must possess (Table 3-2), provide the basis for examining the 'effects' of PPA time to see if they fall in line with these frameworks, or if alternative understandings will emerge. A series of questions will be posed relating to these conditions/components/dimensions (collectively called 'capacity themes' for simplicity), phrased around the statements made about each capacity theme in the literature.

Questions will be devised carefully in language appropriate for and meaningful to teachers, the importance of which was highlighted in a pilot interview with a teacher.

For example, King and Newmann (2001) synthesise the various strands of literature on school improvement, school reform, and organisational change, to arrive at the following statement about the capacity theme 'a professional learning community':

A strong professional community consists of (a) the staff sharing clear goals for student learning, (b) collaboration and collective responsibility among staff to achieve the goals, (c) professional inquiry by staff to address the challenges they face, and, (d) opportunities for staff to influence the schools' activities and policies.

This statement gave rise to the following questions for this research:

- Does PPA time help develop school wide aims for pupil learning?
- Does PPA time enable staff to collaborate to achieve those aims?
- Does PPA time help you become more reflective about challenges you face?
- Does PPA time give you more opportunities to influence the school's activities and policies?

A similar practice will be adopted for each of the capacity themes to ensure that questions are phrased in keeping with the meanings given in the literature (see Appendix 9). Teachers will answer each of the twenty-eight resulting questions firstly in terms of the effects apparent at the present time, and secondly in relation to those effects which may occur in the future. Answers will be given in the form 'definitely does/will', 'probably does/will', 'probably doesn't/won't', 'definitely doesn't/won't' and will demonstrate whether, and how, PPA time is considered to give rise to each effect. Results will be inputted into an MS Excel spreadsheet in order that charts can be plotted showing the full variation in interviewees' perceptions of the effects of PPA time.

Perceptions about influences on the effects will also be induced from their comments on the effects. Interviews will also provide data concerning the relative perceived importance of each effect in each school. Alongside the school conditions surveys, this will provide evidence of what schools are perceived to do well, or less well, in terms of those effects. Reporting of these findings will reflect the central tendency, where there is variation, and charts will be put in the case study to avoid any implication of uniformity where there is none. Appendix 10 details the highly rigorous decision-making process that occurred in interpretation of results. Data from school conditions surveys,

information on perceived importance, and information on perceived effects will be compared in order to find whether PPA is perceived to give rise to effects 'important' to schools.

3.5.5.9. Capacity

Information pertaining to perceptions of capacity building, as well as to whether PPA builds capacity will arise from direct questioning in interviews.

3.6. Summary

A number of conceptual frameworks, drawn mainly from the literature on school improvement, will be used to explore the extent to which, and the means by which, the implementation of a particular policy (PPA time) affecting schools is perceived by members of the workforce to contribute to capacity building. In doing so, this study will aim to contribute to the body of knowledge relating to these frameworks; particularly Stoll's (1999) framework relating to influences on internal capacity. This framework will contribute to understandings of *how* capacity can be built.

The study will take an interpretive approach, utilising a case study design across six schools. A range of sources will be used to triangulate findings, including semi structured interviews, a stakeholder survey, observations, and a diary study. Empirical findings, in the form of perception data, will be analysed and related back to understanding developed through the literature review, in order that this study might contribute to a theoretical understanding of the notions of capacity and capacity building.

4. Analysis School 1 – Barfields Primary School

4.1. Introduction

This chapter represents the first of six case studies and serves to guide the reader through the process of analysis used for each study. It presents the findings from Barfields Primary School. Details of data used in analysis of this case study are given in section 3.5.5. First, a summary of the school pupil context is provided to contextualise the study, and details are given of interviewees. Four key aspects of the research are then studied in turn: the perceived purpose and outcomes of PPA; the influences upon the implementation and effects of PPA; the effects of PPA; and the notion of capacity building. Findings are presented both in terms of the key themes highlighted from within the literature (and explored here), and in terms of emergent themes. A summary of key findings concludes the chapter.

4.1.1. School pupil context

The following table gives some contextual data for Barfields Primary:

	Total number of pupils on roll	Pupils eligible for KS2 tests	Total number and percentage of pupils with SEN				Aggregated Key Stage 2 percentages
			with statements		without statements		
			Number	%	Number	%	
LA Average				5.30		16.10	242
England Average				3.30		15.90	240
Barfields Primary	74	12	2	2.70	12	16.20	292

	% half days missed due to	
	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
LA Average	5.20	0.20
England Average	5.00	0.40
Barfields Primary	4.30	0.10

Table 4-1 Attainment table, Barfields Primary. Source: (DfES, 2005a)

As an early adopter of the PPA time policy, Barfields implemented the full PPA requirement in the academic year 2005/06. At the time of research, Barfields was a small rural school that was popular and oversubscribed. According to the headteacher it was *"a fully inclusive school"* catering for a population of children with a wide variance in ability.

In their most recent inspection, OfSTED (2004a) made a number of observations about Barfields, which are used here to describe the school. There were no children of ethnic minority, travelers, refugees, or children for whom English was an additional language. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals was well below average. The proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) statements was average: two had statements, with another two statements pending. The needs of these children were met by a very dedicated Special Needs department.

Pupils' personal qualities, including attitude, behaviour, and moral development, were judged as being very good at the last inspection, and to contribute to the good rates of learning. Relationships were also very good. Achievement on inspection was judged to be good. Aggregated attainment in national tests by Year 2 pupils in 2005 was well above national average in English, Maths, and Science. Results were expected to vary widely, however, due to the very small number of pupils taking the tests.

Staffing at the school was stable, with few changes and there was no problem with recruitment or retention. Overall, Barfields was judged to be an effective, improving school, which gave good value for money. Pupils were achieving well, which was deemed to be a reflection of the good quality of teaching and learning developed through good leadership on the part of the headteacher. The school was deemed to work well with parents to support children's learning. In the year prior to inspection, the school received the Healthy Schools Award and the Schools Achievement Award.

4.1.2. School conditions

The School Conditions Survey (detailed in section 3.5.3.4) was carried out to determine the extent to which the six 'internal conditions' were perceived to be present already at Barfields. The six 'internal conditions' formed one of the guiding frameworks to this research, and are detailed in section 3.2.2. The survey yielded a 49% rate of return (n=17) and Table 3-9 shows respondents from each stakeholder group at each school. Aggregation of responses gave an overall response level for each of the six internal conditions, which could be ranked on a sliding scale from 'rarely' (represented by a '1' on the Y-axis of Figure 4-1, below), through 'sometimes' (2), 'often' (3), to 'nearly always' (4).

The chart below demonstrates two key points. Firstly, no single stakeholder group tended to rate school conditions more highly than another. This should be considered against the low response rate from governors, however, (the key shows only 1 governor

responded) and the fact that there was only one senior manager. Secondly, with the exception of the internal condition 'involvement', average scores for the other five conditions in Figure 4-1 (developing staff, reflection, leadership, co-ordination, and collaborative planning) fell between 'often' and 'nearly always'.

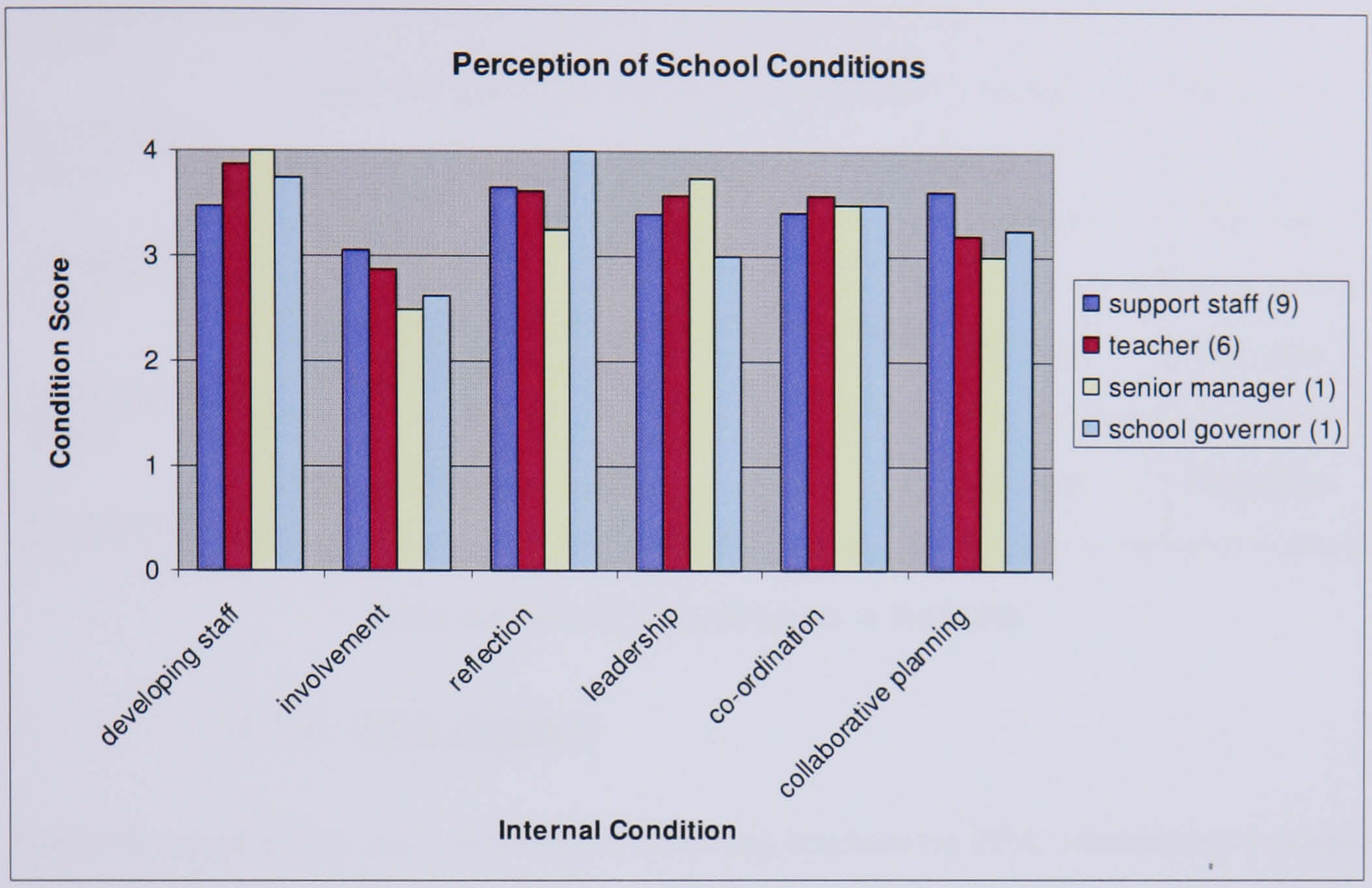

Figure 4-1 Chart showing stakeholder perceptions of Barfields' internal conditions

4.1.3. Interviewees

From a potential pool of nine teachers, the following five were interviewed twice and observed in their classroom setting prior to the first interview. Details of these processes are given in sections 3.5.3.3 and 3.5.3.5. For the purposes of referencing in-text quotations, each interview was assigned a four digit reference number, prefixed by either a 1 (First Round interview), or a 2 (First Round interview), with the second digit representing the school number. The last two digits identify respondents, with 00 corresponding to a head. 1102, therefore, represents an interview in Round One, School One, Teacher 02, and this was Jane, as seen in the table below. Quotations taken from Jane's second interview are indicated by the suffix 2102. For confidentiality, names of participants have been changed across all cases.

Name	Role	Gender	Contract
Anna (1100/2100)	Headteacher / Year 3/4 Teacher	Female	Full time
Gwen (1101/2101)	Year 5/6 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Part time
Jane (1102/2102)	Year R/1 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator / Key Stage Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Hilary (1103/2103)	Year 5/6 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator / Key Stage Co-ordinator	Female	Part time
Tracy (1104/2104)	Year 2 Teacher (NQT)	Female	Part time

Table 4-2 Interview participants at Barfields

4.1.4. PPA strategy

Barfields adopted one main strategy for covering teachers on PPA, contracting a supply teacher to meet the statutory requirements of PPA by providing cover for teachers across the school. Pressure from the governing body, in the form of near unanimous preference for a fully qualified teacher, ensured this strategy was adopted over use of coaches or instructors, whose use the school was happy to reserve for the purposes of curriculum enrichment and teacher training rather than core curriculum delivery. The supply teacher employed had a number of subject specialisms, which he tended to make *"his first port of call"* (1100) during PPA, unless the time fell during a morning, when English or Maths were taught as they would be were the regular class teacher present.

Staff cited various benefits of this strategy, in particular, the continuity afforded by employing someone already familiar with the school, its children, and expectations in terms of teaching methods and discipline. Teachers' own workloads were relieved by the fact that the teacher carried out his own planning. Being retired, he was also flexible to meet additional cover needs. Further, the addition of this teacher, with his unique skill and knowledge set, was thought to boost learning: *"I think that if you have these people who are teaching their strong subjects, their strengths, and you've got that variety of people, and you've got that variety of teaching styles, it's got to improve learning outcomes"* (1100).

4.2. Perceived Purpose and Outcomes

Across all cases, this section will examine the themes emerging from interview data about the perceived *purpose* and the *outcomes* of PPA time. Questions relating to purpose and outcome were considered to be significant in building a picture of teachers' perceptions, which will contribute to the discussion relating PPA to capacity.

Details of data used, and how it was interpreted, is found in section 3.5.4, and an example is shown in Appendix 8. Analysis of the data led to emergent findings that the perceived purposes of PPA related to three main themes: 'work/life balance', 'work/life balance leading to standards', and 'standards'. Perceived outcome emerged as (a) school outcomes: 'school's capacity to do something'; (b) teacher outcomes: 'teachers' capacities for things'; and (c) other outcomes, including a reduction in teacher stress, which was linked back to the school's capacity to raise pupil learning and outcomes.

4.2.1. Perceived purpose of PPA time

At Barfields, just three emergent themes arose from the interpretive process in relation to perceptions about why the PPA time policy was put into place:

- Work/life balance;
- Work/life balance leading to standards;
- Standards.

This section elaborates further on these themes.

4.2.1.1. Work/life balance

Teachers all pointed to alleviation of the *"enormous amount of workload that teachers have"* (1104) as being the purpose of the policy, although their answers demonstrated an understanding of the possible underlying strategic motives on the part of government. Staff opinions on the links between the policy and work/life balance were indicative of the pressure brought to bear on the government by unions, to raise standards, and to improve the burden on teachers for the purposes of recruitment and retention, *"to keep people in their jobs!"* (1102)

By the end of the academic year, there was a definite shift in opinion in that all teachers, including the head, placed a greater proportion of emphasis on improving work/life balance as being the purpose for the policy. Although there was a general recognition

that PPA is *"meant to be a combination of everything – planning, preparation and assessment"* (2102) this was more a description of what the time should constitute than what it should improve: the time was given so that *"I don't have to spend quite so much time in the evenings doing those things"* (2101) . Although one teacher mentioned how as a teacher, PPA would give you time to *"reflect on your professional responsibilities"* (2104), there was still an emphasis on freeing up teachers' own time for this, and teachers were often keen to point out that certain things *"would have been done anyway"* (2101) , or that had a teacher not done these things before PPA *"I'd have been a pretty bad teacher!"* (2101).

4.2.1.2. Work/life balance leading to standards

At the beginning of the year, teachers linked work/life balance to standards, suggesting that improvements to the former might positively affect the latter: *"I suppose they want to be seen to reduce teachers' workload...I suppose they think that perhaps some teachers don't want to have to do it at home and therefore the quality of the lessons go down, so that if they give you time in school to do it, the quality and the standard of the lessons and the teaching will improve and therefore the children's learning will."* (1103).

4.2.1.3. Standards

When first interviewed, and with one exception, teachers also recognised a drive for standards implicit in the policy. The headteacher, particularly, believed standards to be main purpose. In terms of the policy's potential effectiveness in redressing the issue of teachers' work-life balance, however, the headteacher believed PPA would have little impact. Her belief that *"I think that it's to do with standards, particularly. I think there is some kind of platform for work-life balance, but I don't think it makes that much impact."* (1100) demonstrated a mode of thinking which related purpose to outcome. There was a clear link between her perceptions about the purpose of the policy and her opinion about what were the most likely *outcomes* of PPA time. In summary:

Interview round	**Perceptions of purpose**
Round 1	Predominantly to improve work / life balance although with an ulterior motive such as union pressure, staff retention, and standards. The head believed it had little effect on work / life balance.

Round 2	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. One teacher mentioned more effective planning and preparation.

Table 4-3 Summary of perceptions of purpose over the year

4.2.2. Perceived outcomes of PPA time

Teachers and the headteacher were asked for their perceptions about likely outcomes of PPA, and three themes arose:

- The school's capacity to do something;
- Teachers' capacities for certain things;
- Other outcomes (of which work/life balance was the predominant theme).

This section elaborates further on themes.

4.2.2.1. School's capacity to do something

Without exception, all teachers held as likely the idea that PPA time would improve the school's capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes. Teachers were less sure about whether the policy would contribute to the school's capacity to sustain its own development or to manage change. It was suggested that the school's capacity for managing change would possibly benefit from the experience of policy implementation. Regarding the school's capacity to sustain its own development, one teacher suggested this was hard to tell *"because I think that would happen whether we had PPA or not. Simply because of the way we all work."* (1103). The school's capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes was also affected by the effect of PPA time upon two other areas: teachers' capacities for things, and other outcomes, in the form of reduced stress.

By round two, all teachers thought it very likely that pupil learning and outcomes would improve as a result of PPA time. The following were all thought to arise from PPA time and to contribute to improved pupil learning and outcomes: improved individual targeting of pupils, effective self-evaluation, and preparation of better resources. Whether PPA time would improve the school's ability to manage change was less clear. Two said it was the least likely outcome; one, because she had not understood its implications; and another saw a theoretical opportunity provided by PPA for change

management activities: *"more time to look at planning methods and look at changes"* (2102), but considered these unlikely in practice, and certainly unlikely to apply across the wider school. in terms of improving the school's capacity to sustain its own development, teachers generally considered this likely. One teacher suggested this related to the ability of teachers to look beyond their own classroom work during PPA time: *"For example, [one of our teachers] is looking at the school policy for English...and she's been able to use her PPA time [for that]...So yes, I think it inevitably means the school's standards are improved."* (2104). Whether this was legitimate use of PPA time was not questioned.

4.2.2.2. Teachers' capacities for things

Teachers all believed it likely that PPA time would enhance their own individual capacities in certain areas; suggesting reflection, co-operation, flexibility, and learning, as likely outcomes. At least one teacher considered this to be as likely as improving pupil learning and outcomes, or reducing stress. The notion of improving teachers' capacities was linked explicitly back to the school's capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes by one teacher: *"I find it's a very useful time for improving my ability on the computer as much as anything...So in that respect it improves the 'school's capability to improve pupil learning and outcomes' doesn't it."* (1101).

By round two, while most teachers thought PPA very likely to improve teachers' capacities in these areas, the headteacher only considered this possible, dependent on teachers themselves. No-one perceived this as most likely outcome. One teacher suggested these would result *"as long as you are* getting *PPA. I think what could happen is that if you are* not *getting it regularly – and Friday is a day when other things are going on - you can get quite bitter about it!"*. (2102)

4.2.2.3. Other outcomes

Three teachers mentioned a reduction in stress to be a likely outcome. One teacher linked this explicitly back to the school's capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes: *"Obviously the staff are not going to be so stressed... They're going to feel more positive about their role in teaching, which in itself is obviously going to help the children's learning."* (1104).

By the end of the year, three people considered work/life balance to be very likely; one of these believed it to be the most likely outcome of PPA time. In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of outcome
Round 1	Mostly 'school' outcomes (improving pupil learning and outcomes) and 'teacher' outcomes (things like reflection and co-operation), then 'other' outcomes (reduced stress).
Round 2	Mostly 'school' (improving pupil learning and outcomes) then 'other' (work/life balance) then 'teacher' (for certain skills, dependent on their existing skills).

Table 4-4 Summary of perceptions of outcome over the year

4.3. Time

Interview questions relating to the 'effects' of PPA time brought forward 'time' as an emergent theme. This section examines 'time', in terms of both the way teachers spent their time, and the fact that PPA time provided time for certain activities. Table 3-10 shows the number of teachers completing diary studies. Breakdown of time spend in term 1 (when diaries were kept) is shown below.

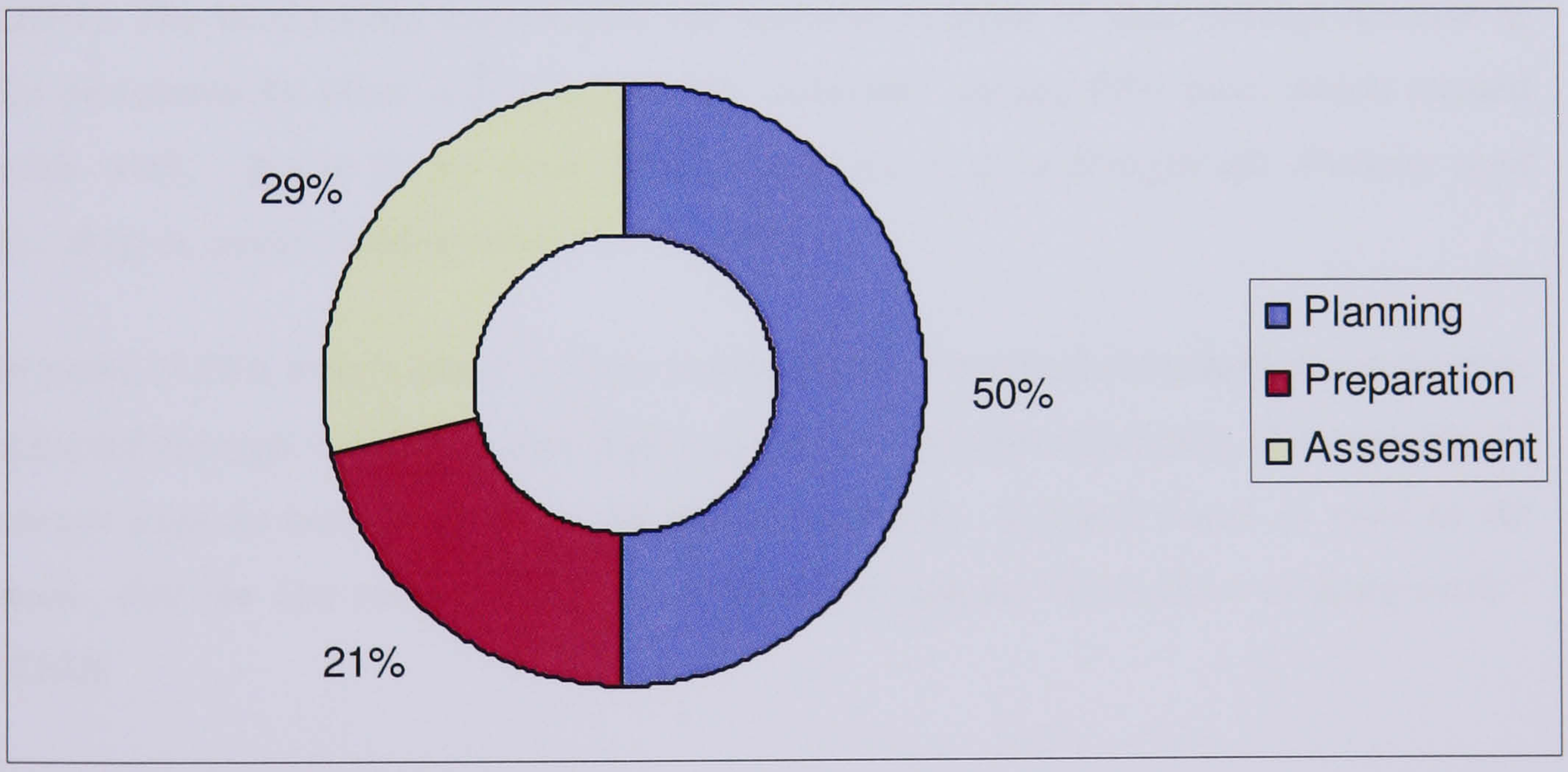

Figure 4-2 Analysis of term 1 diary studies at Barfields

4.3.1. Influences on how time is spent.

In the autumn term of the school's second year of implementation of PPA all teachers were using PPA for planning, although to varying extents. Analysis of the diaries showed 50% of time was spent on planning (Figure 4-2). This tended to be the favoured use of PPA time because it was most time consuming, and a high priority. By the end of

the academic year, the headteacher perceived that PPA was still used predominantly for planning: *"It's really documentation they do in their PPA time – planning, and some forms of evaluation. I think the rest is preparation."* (2100). Throughout the year, preparation was allocated less time than planning. On a couple of recorded occasions, assessment was accorded more time than planning, although it was generally carried out outside of school, or immediately after lessons. Teachers here generally received their PPA time, although diaries provided some evidence of loss of time due to other activities.

4.3.2. The effect of having extra time

Teachers frequently referred to PPA as *"extra time"*. There were a number of effects of having this extra time. For example, PPA time was seen to enhance teacher efficiency; firstly, it relieved fatigue and ensured they were more productive; secondly, it motivated them to make better use of the time adjacent to PPA time; and thirdly, it reduced interruptions. By working at home, one teacher was able to incorporate time that would not have been used for work prior to the introduction of PPA time, as well as to work undisturbed: *"if I take it at home I can get in a lot more because I can start earlier"* (2101). The headteacher experienced the opposite in terms of time savings because of the perception by other staff that she was 'available' during PPA time, which created extra work: *"if I'm in my room then people see it as a free-for-all...Parents tend to...drop in, people tend to come in..."* (2100)

In terms of PPA time's effect on their working week, two teachers talked of a reduction; achieved through working as thoroughly as before, but more efficiently. For example, *"I always used to have to do my work at the weekends....I found I was so tired in the week...that the last thing I could do at night was put my head down to paperwork."* (2102)

4.4. Influences

Implementation of PPA time was examined through the lens of Stoll's (1999) influence framework, which gave three categories of influence: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher', and a number of sub-themes. Headteachers at each school were asked to comment on the range of influences in terms of the impact they had upon implementation and positive outcomes of PPA. Comments by teachers away from the context of questions on the specific 'effects' of PPA were also coded to influence nodes in NVivo. This was done to ensure a rigorous approach to coding that did not just ignore

comments on 'influences' that did not fit into the context of the twelve 'effects'. Most of the sub-themes emerging from the transcribed data were naturally consistent with Stoll's sub-themes, although they varied in importance. At Barfields, one new sub-theme of the 'external influence' category was emergent from the data. This was named 'inherent policy details'.

On analysing and interpreting Barfields' data (see section 3.5.4, on the analysis process), a second finding emerged from the data at this stage. Following an interpretive approach to analysis of data (see section 3.5.4), some influences were seen to enable implementation and positive effects of PPA to arise. It seemed logical to refer to these as 'enablers'. It became apparent from the context of quotations examined through the interpretive process that other influences had the opposite effect. These influences were seen to inhibit implementation, and positive effects of, PPA, and were therefore labelled 'inhibitors'. Further, while a third group of influences did not contribute to PPA's ability to bring about positive effects, it was apparent that without these influences, certain effects were inhibited. These were labelled with the relevant adjective, 'qualifiers', and this labeling system is continued throughout all cases. This idea will be picked up further in the discussion chapter, as it relates to Stoll's (1999) notion that influences can be positive, neutral, or negative (see section 3.2.3) but at this stage it appears Stoll's (1999) labels do not adequately reflect the nature of the influences, hence their re-labeling here in order to distinguish between the emergent findings of this study, and Stoll's (1999) own set of labels. The following sections set out all the influences at Barfields, grouping them under the three main themes: external, school, and teacher. Table 4-8 summarizes all influences on the implementation of PPA at Barfields.

4.4.1. ***External influences***

Stoll's first category within her 1999 framework was 'external influences'. She gave:

- The local community;
- The broader community;
- Political action and 'tone';
- Professional learning community; and
- Global change forces.

The first four were all said to be influential at this school. Two further emergent findings were that (1) external support was an influence; and that (2) the policy itself bore influence, and because of the number of sub-themes within this influence category, it

was considered an external influence in its own right, and not just a sub-theme of the influence 'political action and tone'.

Influence	Findings
Broader community / local community	Barfields School received input from many external agencies, and *"within the local community and the broader community there's a lot of talent"* (1100). This factor would be considered an 'enabler' because the supply cover, sourced externally, was considered to impact positively on the children's learning.
External support	Support from the Local Authority, described by the headteacher as *"very, very positive. Very consistent. But realistic I would say... and she's constantly giving the same message all the time about things"*(2100) has helped with the implementation by helping the headteacher consider options for the school. This support was an 'enabler'.
Political action and tone	In terms of finances, while the headteacher suggests that improved finances are *"crucial"* if the school is to improve, she acknowledges that they are not critical to the continuation of PPA time because the school has *"never had any money [allocated for PPA time]! They talk about the money that's being devolved to schools – well we've never seen any extra money so I don't see any difference."* (2100). Finances were a 'qualifier', neither inhibiting, nor enabling the school to implement PPA in its chosen way. Finances were impacted upon most strongly by the size of the school, which affected funding it received as well as (in this case) the larger than average proportion of SEN children, which cost the school more financially.
Inherent policy details	The statutory nature of the PPA time policy influenced teachers' responses to the question of whether PPA time would be sustainable, and a couple of comments reflected the fact that *"It's got to be [sustainable] hasn't it"* (2100). The investment of effort by government also suggested that outcomes are expected: *"If the aims of PPA are to raise standards, which they presumably are because they're putting a lot of money behind it, so they're expecting some results"* (2100). This factor could best be described as a 'qualifier'. The nature of the policy's provision for PPA within the working day was considered to ensure its effectiveness, because teachers were less tired and more willing; resources and help were available; and extra time was invaluable to improving the quality, detail, reflectiveness, and content of teachers' work. At this school, teachers experienced

	enhanced work/life balance and a resulting reduction in stress because of the nature of PPA in providing extra time. The effect of this was to give teachers back their energy and more importantly, teachers suggested it made them more positive, and willing to contribute over and above the expectation: *"it's improved my enthusiasm, which I think is the foremost to teaching well because...if I'm getting something back I can teach better, so the children will improve; the lessons will be better, and the standards will be raised."* (1102). The policy details were seen as 'enablers'.
Professional learning infrastructure	Training of new teachers reinforced the expectation that schools should provide PPA time, ensuring new teachers knew about, and expected to receive, their 10% PPA time so that *"not only through the union stuff but through the actual training there's going to be expectations of this to be in place fully."* (1100). In the sense that without this awareness teachers might not push for PPA time and its benefits would be lost, this factor could tenuously be described as a 'qualifier'.

Table 4-5 External influences at Barfields

4.4.2. School influences

Stoll's (1999) second influence category was 'school influences'. She gave:

- The particular mix of students;
- Relationships between teachers;
- Morale;
- History;
- Culture;
- Power issues;
- Support staff;
- Structures; and
- Leadership.

Influence	Findings
Culture	Historically, Barfields had an 'open door' policy of encouraging people into the school and into one another's classrooms to share their expertise, which was seen by the head as being *"very much something that you can build on"* (1100) because teachers were in the habit of

	observing one-another, and of bringing in parents already. This factor would be described as an 'enabler'. She described the opposite situation as a *"cloistered culture"*.
History	Size and finances were closely linked and in the headteacher's experience as a Consultant for Workforce Remodelling; small schools tended to be the ones struggling to implement PPA time. Unlike in larger schools, and in secondary and middle schools, *"for the primary and first and especially small schools, it's been a very new thing, to be able to afford to have people out of class...it hits small schools very hard"* (1100). Small schools also felt the effects of an increase in SEN children more heavily. Although *"it's important in a small school that we know what we are each doing"* (2102) Barfields was a single intake school and therefore teachers had different year groups and *"are not going to be sharing the same work"* (2102). Size, in that it affected finances and opportunities for collaboration in such things as target setting (a process), was an 'inhibitor'. A large core of part-time staff caused some concern because of its impact on intensifying the curriculum *"because everybody comes in planned up to the hilt"* and on children, some of whom *"never know whether they're coming or going!"* (2100). The implication was that PPA *"might just"* amplify this effect, which would detract from the positives of PPA. This factor would therefore be an 'inhibitor'.
Mix of pupils	The above comments about intensified curriculum must be compared with a comment from the beginning of the year where the headteacher had told of how pupils did *"enjoy teachers who have their lessons well prepared...they do like to learn and be challenged"* and in this sense, they were able to cope with the change: *"they're tired but they're not cross about it"*. In this sense, the particular mix of pupils had the property of a 'qualifier'. On the other hand, a high percentage of SEN pupils was a drain on financial resources and compounded any negative financial impacts of PPA. Mix of pupils was also an 'inhibitor'.
Leadership	In terms of the headteacher's own vision for PPA time, she was clear about why the time is given during the working day, and it was apparent from teachers' comments upon the purpose of PPA that she had communicated this vision clearly to staff. She believed that *"money is not the issue for teachers. I think it's time. I don't think you can implement it any other way with the full time workers, it's got to be within their working week, otherwise you are just losing the whole focus of why you are giving it in the first place."*. Clearly the leader

	played a role in understanding the benefits of organising the time in this way. In terms of what was done during that time, however, she allowed staff the autonomy to make their own decisions about how their PPA time should be spent. She suggested this decision was based on need-led personal choice. The headteacher's attitude towards PPA was interpreted as an 'enabling' one.
Structures	Accommodation within the building could be a problem for teachers, as one teacher said: *"I do it at home because it's so much better for me. If I'm at school I'm disturbed continually and there's nowhere to go"* (2101) This element of structures was therefore an 'inhibitor'. The extent to which PPA time enhanced assessment may have depended on existing assessment policy and *"to a certain extent, on how you assess as a school"* (1103). With no positive comments about assessment policy here to justify referring to assessment policy as an 'enabler', it was appropriate to label it a 'qualifier', which, if insufficiently rigorous, would detract from the potential benefits of PPA. In terms of the organisation of PPA, the fact that cover was provided by the same person throughout the school ensured continuity and also *"has the flexibility to take up any supply needs that we have"* (2100). PPA cover arrangements were thus an 'enabler'. Certain issues were covered in staff meetings, thereby 'inhibiting' the perceived effects of PPA.
Power issues	This was not seen as an issue: *" 'Power issues'. No, we don't really have any here...We haven't got any management structures so it's not treading on toes.."* and was therefore a 'qualifier'.
Morale	The headteacher related 'emotional well-being' to 'morale', suggesting that neither had been important drivers of PPA time benefits. These factors were labelled 'qualifiers'.
Support staff	PPA time allowed the school to reap the benefits of the strengths of support staff, fairly loosely. One teacher suggested that where support staff were involved *"it certainly gives other teachers an opportunity to be able plan effectively for their staff, which will in turn enhance their professionalism"* (2104). This could be considered an 'enabler'.
Teacher relationships	The headteacher pointed to positive relationships in all aspects of the school: *"the children are very comfortable with all the staff...it's very much a family school so there are good relationships between the staff and the parents and the pupils. We all work together."* (2100), which had ensured there was no negative feedback from families about PPA. At the beginning of the year she had said relationships between teachers was *"a very strong influencing factor...It helps because we support one another."*. Strong teacher relationships were therefore an

	'enabler'.

Table 4-6 School influences at Barfields

4.4.3. *Teacher influences*

Stoll's third influence category within her 1999 framework was 'teacher influences'. She proposed:

- Life and career experience;
- Beliefs;
- Emotional wellbeing;
- Knowledge;
- Skills;
- Motivation to learn;
- Confidence that (s)he can make a real difference; and
- Sense of interdependence.

Of these, six arose as influential at Barfields, and there was one emergent finding: 'use of PPA time'.

Influence	**Findings**
Beliefs	In some schools, teachers' beliefs about the role of a teacher and whether anyone else should have an input *"can be an obstacle, definitely"* (1100) but the headteacher did not perceive this to be an issue at Barfields. Reflecting on the school's culture, she considered the school to be particularly open to outsiders, to the point that *"no one's frightened of anyone else coming in their classroom"*. Teachers' lack of negativity about handing over their class made this factor a 'qualifier'.
Confidence, emotional well-being	Commitment of staff was not held to be a problem, and the feeling of efficacy on the part of teachers *"hasn't really been an issue"*(1100). The headteacher related 'emotional well-being' to 'morale', suggesting that neither had been important drivers of PPA time benefits. These factors were labelled 'qualifiers'.
Motivation to learn	With the exception of one or two *"older ones who find it difficult to change"*, the majority of teachers here tended to *"take on anything if it's got a value to it"* (1100) . If an area needed developing then teachers would run with the idea. Implicit in this

	positivity was the notion that most teachers had sufficient drive to generate beneficial ideas and therefore, this could be theoretically defined as an 'enabler', although further evidence that teachers were creative in their use of PPA time was not forthcoming. This factor might more appropriately be defined as a 'qualifier'.
Sense of interdependence	Teachers tended to work alone in this school because of its size. Because of this setup there was limited interdependence amongst teachers, and PPA time did not foster co-operation. The headteacher considered *"the relationships that people have; mutual support etcetera"*, to be more of an influence than the level of interdependence experienced. Affected by the size of the school, this factor inhibited benefits of PPA.
Skills	Whether or not PPA time enhanced teachers' skills in areas such as learning, reflection, risk-taking etc. *"depends on what they're like as people"* (1100). In this school, the head considered this *"possible"*, implying that it is in no way certain, and that skills are a 'qualifier'. There was also the issue of the skills of the cover teacher, which *"hasn't been an issue"* (1100) because the particular teacher was brought in for that reason. Because the school would not have employed an unskilled teacher, this met the criteria of a 'qualifier'.
Life and career experience (role)	At least one teacher's role gave her *"a lot"* of responsibility (2102), which affected her perception of the extent to which PPA affected her decision-making power. As an influence, teacher 'role' could be labelled an 'inhibitor'.
Use of time	Opportunities for informal coaching arose on occasion, which teachers could take part in during their PPA time. This was considered to facilitate staff development. Other uses of PPA time were attributed to the various effects of PPA time including feeding back to children; subject area monitoring; working on targets discussed in staff meetings; resource planning; and contacting people outside school. Time spent on such activities as assessment and reflection was said to benefit the target-setting process.

Table 4-7 Teacher influences at Barfields

The following table concludes this section on influences. The table includes an 'Affected by' column, which shows that certain influences upon PPA's effects were themselves *perceived to be* influenced by other factors. This information was also emergent from

the coding process. As is clear from this table, the school's size was seen to be a key influence here. For example, implementation of PPA time was inhibited by the financial repercussions of a disproportionate number of SEN children. The abnormally large proportion of SEN children was influenced by the size of the school. Parents of SEN children tended to consider a small school better able to meet these needs, and opted for Barfields.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES		Affected by	Q	E	I
Community				✓	
Political action/tone					
	Funding	Size; pupils	✓		
Inherent policy details					
	In the working day			✓	
	Extra time			✓	
	Statutory		✓		
Professional infrastructure			✓		
External support				✓	
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
Culture					
	Openness			✓	
History					
	Size				✓
	Part time staff				✓
Mix of pupils					
	Positive attitudes		✓		
	High proportion SEN	Size			✓
Leadership					
	Attitude towards PPA			✓	
	Vision			✓	
Structures					
	Accommodation				✓
	Assessment policy		✓		
	PPA strategy (cover)			✓	
	Staff meetings				✓
Power issues			✓		
Morale			✓		
Relationships				✓	
Support staff					
	Teachers can plan for them better			✓	
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Beliefs					
	Who should take a class		✓		
Confidence			✓		
Emotional well-being			✓		
Motivation			✓		
Interdependence					✓
Skills					
	Of cover teacher		✓		
	Of teachers		✓		
Experience (role)					

	Role limits perceived effects				✓
Use of PPA time					
	Coaching	Leadership		✓	
	Feedback			✓	
	Subject area monitoring			✓	
	Meeting staff meeting targets			✓	
	Resource planning			✓	
	Contacting outsiders			✓	

Table 4-8 Summary of influences on PPA's implementation at Barfields

In summary, external influences were either qualifiers or enablers. A range of school influences affected PPA, while teacher influences were predominantly qualifiers and enablers, as indicated in Table 4-8.

4.5. Effects

As detailed in section 3.5.5.8, a number of frameworks brought to light through the literature review generated 12 capacity 'themes' on which to base this exploratory study. As a reminder, a series of questions (Appendix 9) were posed around the 12 themes to learn whether or not PPA was perceived to give rise to each; and how important each theme was considered for improvement at Barfields. This was carried out with the purpose of developing an understanding of the process of capacity building and its influences. These findings could then be triangulated with the school conditions survey responses to find out whether PPA was perceived to contribute to improvement where it was required in each school. Through the coding process (carried out as described in 3.5.5.8), respondents' answers to these questions were analysed to show the factors influencing their answers (i.e. to find the 'influences' on 'effects'). **For clarity, this study will label the same 12 'themes' as *'effects'* where they relate to effects arising from PPA, and *'themes'* where they relate to the theoretical frameworks.** A report of the analysis of PPA's 'effects' is given in the following 13 sections.

4.5.1. General trends

A visual representation of perceived 'effects' of PPA, both 'now' and in the 'future', is shown in two charts below (Figure 4-3 and Figure 4-4). Data was taken directly from interview responses to a series of questions (see Appendix 9). Charts were not constructed in an attempt to quantify the data, but served a number of purposes:

- To be transparent about variation in responses;

- To indicate clearly that the relationship between PPA and some effects were less clear cut than others;
- To explain the interpretation process, clearly demonstrating assumptions.

The charts are to be read as follows:

- A white bar represents 'probably'; a black bar represents 'definitely';
- Above the x-axis the answer was positive; below the x-axis the answer was negative;
- The length of a bar corresponds to the number of respondents who gave that particular answer;
- Numbering along the x-axis refers to the particular interview question.

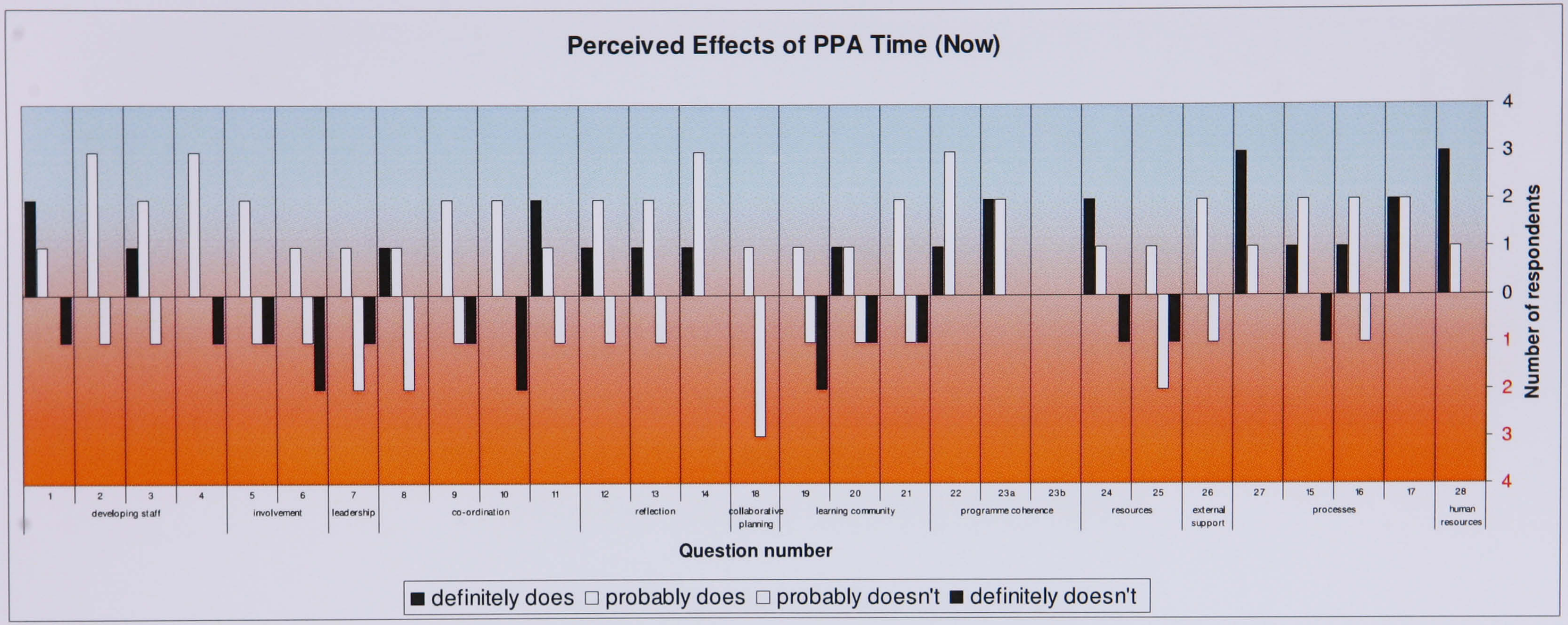

Figure 4-3 The effects PPA is perceived to have now.

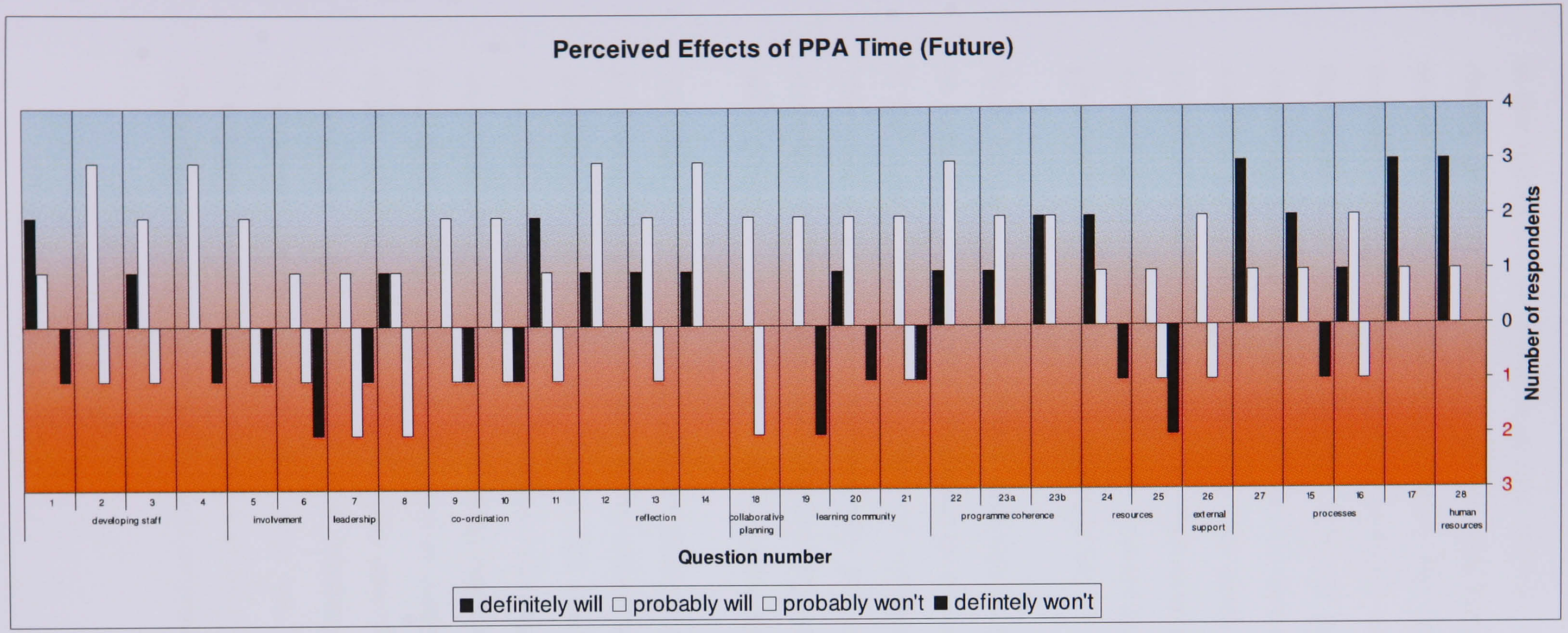

Figure 4-4 The effects PPA may have in the future

A clear picture emerged from the charts. Firstly, the two charts are very similar in shape, demonstrating that in general, if PPA was perceived to give rise to a certain effect, teachers in this school had no reason to suggest that this would not continue into the future. Looking closely at below the x-axes it can be seen that for some questions, people changed their answer between now and in the future. For example, number 10, a 'definitely doesn't' formalise communication became a 'probably won't' as the person could not comment on the future with certainty. Another example is number 17: a 'probably will' improve assessment became 'definitely will' for the future, because practice was thought to enhance teachers' use of PPA time. Secondly, the graph oscillates about the x-axis so that certain groups of effects were perceived as happening and certain groups were not. The decision making process by which data was interpreted to decide whether or not an effect was perceived to happen is given in Appendix 10.

From left to right along the charts: PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, on reflection, on programme coherence, on processes, and on human resources. On average, it had a marginally positive effect on external support, and on co-ordination (because responses varied). It was not generally perceived to positively affect on involvement, leadership, collaborative planning, or learning community. Similarly, differences of opinion about resources, meant that by a small margin, the same was true of this effect.

The chart below (Figure 4-5) indicates which of these twelve effects of PPA were perceived to be important for improvement at this school, and reflects answers to direct questioning of teachers and the headteacher. Notably this chart does not match the results of the school conditions survey (Figure 4-1) where one might consider areas which scored weakest (involvement and collaborative planning) ought to be those which the school focuses on. In fact, these 'effects' were not perceived as overly important, as shown below. It should be noted, however, that the weakest areas according to the survey were not given as real weaknesses, with involvement and collaborative planning never scoring less than 'sometimes'. (As a reminder, the survey was based on Ainscow et al.'s (1995) School Conditions Survey, which examined 6 of these 12 themes: developing staff, involvement, leadership, co-ordination, reflection, and collaborative planning).

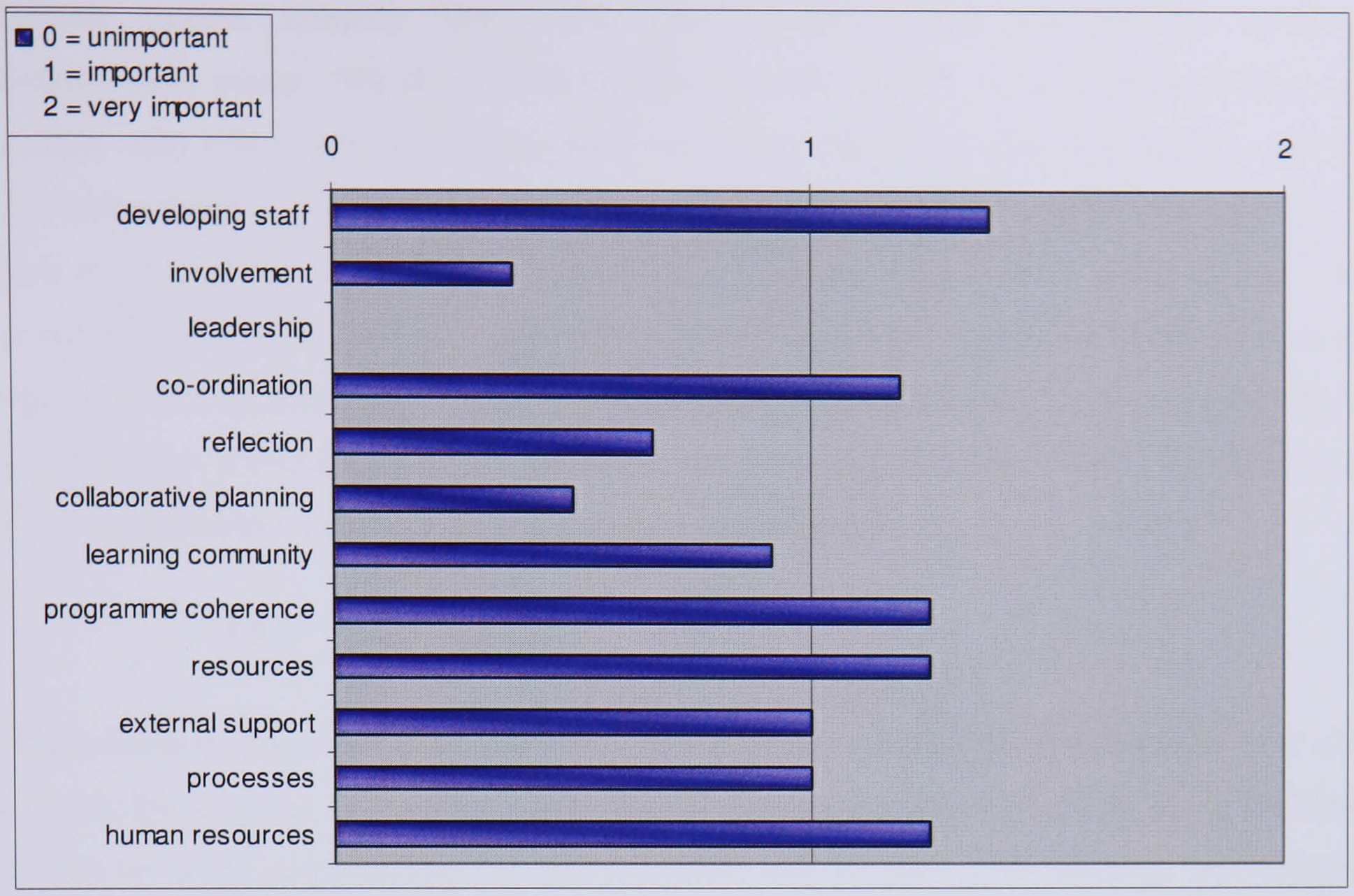

Figure 4-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement

Comparison of Figure 4-5 with Figure 4-3 and Figure 4-4 shows some visual correlation in that the four effects PPA was not considered to give rise to (involvement, leadership, co-ordination, or learning community), were also four of the effects considered less important for improvement at this school on Figure 4-5. Further, PPA was seen to give rise to six of the seven 'effects' considered important (score ≥ 1 on Figure 4-5); although two were improved only marginally (external support and co-ordination). The important effect it did not improve was resources, but this lack of effect was only marginal. These findings indicate PPA had potential for improving this school in the direction staff perceive as important. The following 12 sections explain how PPA was perceived to bring about the effects shown in Figure 4-3 and Figure 4-4. An interpretive process was used to determine the contextual issues that affected respondents' perceptions about whether or not each effect arose from PPA. Under each heading below, the data was interpreted so that influences affecting the 12 themes could be drawn out.

4.5.2. Developing staff

Teachers saw their skills enhanced by PPA. Its provision of extra time made teachers better *"able to adequately plan and prepare, and reflect on my teaching."* (1104), and provided opportunities for informal coaching. It also improved resources such that expectations of children could be raised, although these expectations were high anyway. The school's

flexible culture, whereby *"doors are open"* (1101) meant that although working arrangements meant *"We don't work together on PPA at all"* (2101), the possibility for contact with other staff during that time was there. The extra time also helped staff to "*consider things within your own teaching practice that you may be able to then pass on to help to enrich other people's"* (1104) or to plan better for support staff *"which will in turn enhance their professionalism"* (2104). In terms of improving assessment skills, extra time was seen to help, although with the caveat *"only to the degree of how well your assessment policies (how you assess as a school) are in place anyway"* (1103), and provided time was spent on assessment either directly during PPA, or indirectly.

4.5.3. Involvement

Three teachers suggested extra time enhanced feedback to children, while another said she did not use the time for assessment or, by association, for feedback. In terms of children taking on board responsibility for that feedback and for their own learning, one teacher suggested that, dependent upon resources; better teaching might encourage children to take responsibility. Other teachers were less convinced or certain. PPA time was generally not considered to affect parental involvement apart from very tenuously through more opportunities for home/school communication. Parental involvement was considered to be dependent more on other factors such as school ethos and the particular year group; its needs and its pool of parents.

4.5.4. Leadership

Initially, all teachers perceived PPA time to enhance their decision making power for various reasons, for example, by making them more rational *"because I'm not as tired"* (1102); by giving them extra time to reflect, which would *"ultimately give me more confidence in making decisions"* (1104); and by enhancing assessment knowledge for decision-making. Towards the end of the year, and coincidentally when the word 'responsibility' was used in questioning, teachers all emphasised how they did not wish to take on further responsibility. The size of the school meant teachers already had *"corporate responsibility"* (2100) and in some cases, demanding roles with *"a lot"* of responsibility (2102), which affected their perception of the extent to which PPA affected their decision-making power.

4.5.5. Co-ordination

Teachers at Barfields generally worked alone but those two who worked with others during PPA were positive about the relationship between PPA time and co-operation. Extra time

provided by PPA was a powerful alternative explanation for perceptions of enhanced co-ordination also. It meant that *"even though I am not literally working with colleagues, I am ready at the meeting to talk things through with them [because of what I have done in PPA]"* (2102). Ideas generated and work carried out during that time helped teachers gain *"confidence in being able to respond [to questions] about individual evaluations of children or of how we're going to go forward with planning as a school"* (1104) and to *"have some input [with colleagues]."*(2104). Extra time was also said to formalise practices in a loose sense, allowing teachers *"to put things down in written form that may have previously been verbal."* (1104). Extra time also allowed teachers to *"look through different resources, information, and data, which will help me look more broadly at things."*(2104). This impact was noticed less so by those with greater workloads, and for whom *"I'm not knocking PPA, but it's never enough."* (2102)

4.5.6. Reflection

PPA was seen to help reflection particularly for those teachers with subject area responsibilities and for whom, prior to PPA,*"I'd be wanting to do my [own day to day] work in school a bit more, wouldn't I"* (2101). Extra time also allowed them to work on targets discussed in staff meetings, and to assess pupils. A culture that already recognised and used strengths of staff meant that PPA did not enhance this. PPA time did allow the school to reap the benefits of these strengths, however. Where support staff were involved *"it certainly gives other teachers an opportunity to be able plan effectively for their staff, which will in turn enhance their professionalism"* (2104), and the strengths of the teacher providing cover for classes were utilised as he was given the opportunity to teach I.T.

4.5.7. Collaborative planning

Extra time gave potential benefits for the school-wide focus on problem solving in Maths, which teachers *"may have the opportunity to look further into in PPA time"* (1104). Relating also to 'learning community' below, while collaboration and target setting happened in staff meetings rather than in PPA time, PPA enabled this collaboration in the sense that teachers had additional time to read up on things. This facilitated further constructive discussion with colleagues outside of PPA time. For example: *"We don't collaborate in PPA time, but PPA gives me time to think about it at home, read up on it, so that when I come in I can collaborate by chatting with colleagues around a table."* (2102).

4.5.8. Learning community

Extra time gave teachers an opportunity to reflect; *"and think about how I might improve/change things in future."* (2104). This said, in today's teaching climate teachers were expected to *"take much more responsibility for their own development and career"* (2100). In the same way, two teachers did not believe PPA contributed further to teachers' ability to reflect. Similarly to the issue of whether PPA time gave teachers more responsibility over decisions, teachers were initially positive that PPA would give them opportunities to influence the school's activities and policies, but towards the end of the year opinions were less certain, with two teachers commenting that *"I think we've got as much influence as we want to have."* (2101; 2104).

4.5.9. Programme coherence

All interviewees perceived PPA time as contributing to a link between staff and pupil and school goals, with one comment reflecting that this might be through subject area planning: *"reading through courses that my staff can go on, to widen their knowledge [of my subject area]"* (2102). In terms of the sustainability of practices developed during PPA, teachers picked up on the statutory nature of the policy, saying that *"it's got to be, hasn't it."* (2100).

4.5.10. Resources

At the beginning of the year, extra time *"to devote to [resources]"* (1104) led teachers to be positive about PPA's effects in this area. Later in the year it became apparent that this was subject to teachers' use of time. The size of the school meant it attracted greater numbers of SEN children and there was a perception that *"Small schools tend to suffer, don't they."* (2101) because of losses of economy. PPA was seen, therefore, as another drain on financial resources. The headteacher suggested PPA time should help teachers to focus on the key issues and, therefore, schools to budget more wisely so that *"you would be able to focus your money more on areas that you believe are important [as] a natural extension of PPA"* (2100).

4.5.11. External support

At Barfields, external people were heavily involved. When first interviewed, teachers saw PPA time as an opportunity to involve them by allowing teachers extra time to make contact.

4.5.12. Processes

Teachers credited PPA time with improvements in planning and assessment because *"It enables you to reflect"* (2104) and it enhanced work/life balance, which helped teachers be more focused and carry out plans in the way intended: *"it's that feeling of not being frazzled. You're organised...so when you come to teaching it you're very clear about what you've done."* (1102). In terms of collaborative target setting, however, one teacher suggested it would be more effective *"in a big school, where you've got four or five people on PPA all at the same time"* and that here, corporate activities were carried out in staff meetings *"when we're all together"* (1101).

4.5.13. Human resources

All teachers found PPA time motivating, and for the primary reason that it gave them extra time. This extra time generated feelings of efficiency, control, enthusiasm for the job *"because I feel as if I'm getting something back"* (1101), and motivation that *"I've got to get it done by Friday!"* (2102).

4.6. Capacity

As well as examining the effects of PPA to see whether they sit in line with the 12 'themes', this study will triangulate these findings with perceptions about whether or not PPA builds capacity. (As a reminder, this study labels the same 12 'themes' as *'effects'* where they relate to effects arising from PPA, and *'themes'* where they relate to the theoretical frameworks.). Direct questioning in interviews was used to find out whether PPA was perceived to build capacity, and what 'capacity' meant to respondents (see section 3.5.5.9) and analysis of answers is given in this section for each case.

4.6.1. Does PPA build capacity?

Despite her perception that PPA time *"definitely"* (2101) had a range of positive outcomes (particularly in terms of 'reflection'), one teacher said that PPA did not build capacity for improvement in this school. Her reason for this appeared to be that *"Before we had PPA time I worked just as hard. But I am getting more done now. But I don't want you to imply that this PPA time is absolutely wonderful and that everything is going to so much better because of it. Because I think we were pretty good before it, actually. We were just working harder."* (2101). Clearly, this teacher felt uncomfortable crediting PPA with improving her working

practices, even though she had said 'pupil learning and outcomes', 'teacher outcomes' and 'work life balance' were all *"very likely"* to arise from PPA time.

The headteacher believed that the key to building capacity for improvement through PPA time was for teachers to use it for reflection and areas of personal development, and not just for planning. This could include observation of others' teaching, although she was aware that teachers did not all use some of their PPA time for personal development. By trusting teachers, nevertheless, to make a decision based on their needs she saw this as very effective *"because it's showing the respect for the effort that they need to put into the planning and preparation and assessment of children's work. I think it's actually recognising that. It's been very good in terms of morale and motivation"* (2100).

The idea that staff were more engaged with their work because they were appreciated, motivated, and rested was a recurring theme. Another teacher echoed this notion of *"appreciation; that bit of time back, when you can actually do quality planning and preparation which isn't before or after school, or in your weekend. So it is quality time"* (2102). Completing the link from one teacher's opinion to the next, a third teacher added *"self reflection"* to the list of things teachers were able to do better: *"It gives individual teachers the opportunity and motivation to move on with their learning, self reflection and teaching skills. This ultimately is going to improve the school overall. If teachers did not have this opportunity to have personal space to plan etc, that would have a knock-on effect because they would just be totally bogged down with work and that would mean in the end that the children did not get the best opportunities. They would have teachers who are totally stressed."* (2104)

4.6.2. What is capacity building?

The headteacher identified *"potential to do better"* as a 'resource' that a school would possess, were it holding the 'capacity for improvement'. 'Potential' included *"ability"*, and *"skills"* latent in the organisation (2100). She said also that it might signify a gap in efficiency or effectiveness.

The three teachers took an alternative view; that 'capacity for improvement' signified a 'gap', space, or opportunity to develop further the abilities or activities currently within the school. For the teacher who did not consider PPA to develop this, 'capacity for improvement' is something to be attained by *"getting together and discussing things, which we don't do during our PPA time."* (2101). The emphasis on opportunities by one teacher was based on the view that all schools can improve, and therefore have 'capacity for

improvement'. She suggests that provision of opportunities and resources would allow bridging of this gap, and thus, a narrowing of the school's need to improve. Sustaining improvement was mentioned as important by one teacher: *"you have to move on; there's always the future to focus on"*. (2104).

Marrying up notions of capacity building with the effects of PPA time; for those teachers who did consider PPA to build capacity, they were in fact suggesting that it bridged a capacity 'gap'. The headteacher's resource-based view would be consistent with the use of the phrase 'build capacity'.

4.7. Summary

4.7.1. Strategy

Barfields' main strategy was the employment of a qualified teacher, who brought some of his own specialisms to the classroom whenever possible. This teacher was retired, making him flexible. Contract extension was also used in some cases, particularly part-time job-share teachers.

4.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

Themes emerging about the perceived *purpose* of the policy were work/life balance, and standards, although towards the end of the year the idea of work/life balance came to dominate people's perceptions of the purpose of PPA.

At both ends of the year, school outcomes, namely 'improved pupil learning and outcomes', were considered most likely to result from PPA. At the beginning of the year, 'teacher outcomes' were assigned more likelihood than at the end of the year. Towards the end of the year, 'other' outcomes, namely 'enhanced work/life balance', were still perceived to be very likely.

Perceptions of *purpose* and *outcomes* fitted fairly closely together, although towards the end of the year there was a greater emphasis on work/life balance as the purpose, while still maintaining pupil learning and outcomes as the most likely outcome. Teachers considered the policy to be about addressing their work/life balance issues with a view to enhancing the quality of the activities carried out during PPA time, although notably, 'standards', while discussed in the context of 'enhanced pupil learning and outcomes' earlier on in the year, were not mentioned explicitly at the end of the year. This showed that teachers did not automatically equate 'standards' with 'learning and outcomes'. Teachers were constructing

an implicit link between PPA time, improved planning, preparation, and assessment, and enhanced pupil learning and outcomes.

4.7.3. *Time*

Five reasons explained why planning tended to dominate PPA time: its demand for time, its demand for concentration, its urgency, accessibility to resources in school, checks made by the headteacher, and the ease with which another activity could be carried out outside of PPA.

Three main effects on time were noticed: enhanced efficiency, reduced efficiency, and a reduced working week.

4.7.4. *Influences*

Relating to Table 4-8, key findings were as follows:

- External influences on implementation of PPA were predominantly 'enablers', facilitating positive effects. Financial support for PPA was not forthcoming in any tangible way. This consistency ensured the statutory cover could be provided with available resources rather than allowing the school to fall into the trap of relying on finances to make the provision. School influences were mixed.
- PPA strategy was greatly influenced by the size of the school. Size affected finances, and therefore options for cover. Size limited the opportunity for collaborative practices within PPA time. Size, insofar as it affected accommodation, was also an issue at the school, in which building work was being carried out, and in which there were few places where teachers could work.
- Leadership was also significant in that it affected teachers' use of time.
- The number of part time teachers affected the cover strategy, and the number of teachers for which accommodation was a problem. At least two teachers had additional hours added to their contracts, which allowed them to work at home, making accommodation less of an issue.
- PPA time cover provision was also affected by the open culture of the school, which meant the headteacher could happily consider bringing in a supply teacher. An existing relationship with this teacher further influenced the choice of supply, and continuation of this relationship positively affected the school in that it brought continuity and flexibility. The influence exerted by individual teachers was as strong as the school-level factors.

- Various facets of teachers' characteristics were held to be insignificant simply because they were neither problematic, nor exceptionally conducive to deciding on, or making the strategy work. The fact that teachers were generally positive about others taking their classes was less of an issue here, where they and their children were already familiar with the supply teacher.

4.7.5. ***Effects***

The summary table below shows the effects PPA was seen to have, or not to have, at this school according to interview evidence; and the sorts of influences impacting upon whether or not they were associated with PPA. Ticks represent an influence that had a positive impact upon a particular effect. Crosses represent an influence that had a negative bearing on an effect. For example, the effect 'leadership' was on the whole not seen to arise from PPA, and three crosses had bearing on this: contributing to this perception were negative influences in terms of history, motivation, and teachers' roles. Key findings were:

- PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, reflection, programme coherence, processes, and human resources, which relate closely to those areas considered important for improvement at this school.
- On average, it had a marginally positive effect on external support, and on co-ordination.
- It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, leadership, collaborative planning, or learning community. Similarly, differences of opinion about resources, meant that by a small margin, the same was true of this effect.
- Key influences were policy details, and teachers' use of PPA time.

					Effects of PPA												
					Found to be associated with PPA							Not associated with PPA					
		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor	Developing staff	Reflection	Co-ordination	Programme Coherence	Processes	Human resources	External support	Resources	Involvement	Leadership	Collaborative planning	Learning community
External	Community		✓													
	Political action/tone	✓	✓													
	Inherent policy details	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓ ✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professional infrastructure	✓														
	External support		✓													
School	Culture		✓		✓	✗	✓									
	History			✓					✗			✗		✗		
	Mix of pupils	✓		✓	✗							✗	✗			
	Leadership		✓													
	Structures	✓	✓	✓	✓ ✗	✓			✗							
	Power issues	✓														
	Morale	✓														
	Support staff		✓			✓										
	Relationships		✓													
Teacher	Beliefs	✓														
	Confidence	✓														
	Emotional well-being	✓														
	Motivation	✓			✓ ✗									✗		
	Interdependence			✓												
	Skills	✓														
	Experience (Role)			✓		✓	✗							✗		✗
	Use of PPA time		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓ ✗	✓ ✗	✓	✓	✓

Table 4-9 Summary of links between 'influences' and 'effects'

4.7.6. ***Capacity building***

PPA was generally considered to build capacity, especially through its provision for reflection and personal development, and its effect on teacher motivation. Ideas on what 'capacity for improvement' might mean included both having the tools to improve, and needing the tools to improve. PPA was seen to build capacity because of its provision of these tools, such as ability and skills.

5. Analysis School 2 – Hall Garden Primary

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the second case study, Hall Gardens Primary School. Details of data used in analysis of this case study were given in section 3.5.5. First, a summary of the school pupil context is provided to contextualise the study, and details are given of interviewees. Four key aspects of the research are then studied in turn: the perceived purpose and outcomes of PPA; the influences upon the implementation and effects of PPA; the effects of PPA; and the notion of capacity building. Findings are presented both in terms of the key themes highlighted from within the literature (and explored here), and in terms of emergent themes. A summary of key findings concludes the chapter.

5.1.1. School pupil context

	Total number of pupils on roll	Pupils eligible for KS2 tests	Total number and percentage of pupils with SEN				Aggregated Key Stage 2 percentages
			with statements		without statements		
			Number	%	Number	%	
LA Average				5.30		16.10	242
England Average				3.30		15.90	240
Hall Garden Primary	204	27	4	2.00	62	30.40	215

	% half days missed due to	
	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
LA Average	5.20	0.20
England Average	5.00	0.40
Hall Garden Primary	5.80	0.10

Table 5-1 Attainment table, Hall Garden Primary. Source: (DfES, 2005a)

Prior to this research, OfSTED last inspected this school in 2004 (2004b), but more recently completed an inspection in July 2006 (OfSTED, 2006b). Information was taken from these reports and from 2005 attainment tables (DfES, 2005a). At the time of writing Hall Garden was a community school that had experienced a series of traumatic changes in recent years, having gone twice into special measures and held a succession of leaders. Falling numbers resulted from a negative public image, although the school was working to bring people through the doors.

In their most recent inspection, OfSTED (2006b) made a number of observations about Hall Garden, which are used here to describe the school. The catchment area served by the school had many families with unfavourable socio-economic circumstances, and standards were low on entry to the school. Intake from the private housing within the catchment was very limited because those families *"voted with their feet"* (2200). The proportion of children eligible for free school meals was twice the national average. Pupils showed a positive attitude towards school, good personal development, and improving behaviour. Attendance was comparable to the national average. Achievement was satisfactory across the board, although attainment was low because of the low entry attainments, and the number of children with learning difficulties and SEN statements. Although progress of children had improved significantly over the past two years, it was slowed in some classes by teaching that was only 'satisfactory'. Leadership by the headteacher gave clear direction to the school, and provided sound monitoring across the school. Some leadership staff were not as effective as they could have been because their roles were underdeveloped and monitoring on their part was not sufficiently rigorous. The school provided a good range of additional learning opportunities for children and creative development was strong, as recognised by the recent Silver Artsmark Award.

5.1.2. School conditions

The School Conditions Survey (detailed in section 3.5.3.4) was carried out to determine the extent to which the six 'internal conditions' were perceived to be present already at Hall Garden. The six 'internal conditions' formed one of the guiding frameworks to this research, and are detailed in section 3.2.2. The survey yielded a 23% rate of return (n=11) and Table 3-9 shows respondents from each stakeholder group. Aggregation of responses gave an overall response level for each of the six internal conditions, which could be ranked on a sliding scale from 'rarely' (represented by a '1' on the Y-axis of Figure 4-1, below), through 'sometimes' (2), 'often' (3), to 'nearly always' (4). School governors taking part tended to rank the survey statements as occurring with less frequency than did other stakeholder groups. It cannot be known whether this trend would continue had more governors taken part. The leadership of the school (one fifth of which is represented here) has the most positive view in most cases. Of the remaining two stakeholder groups no one group tended to rate school conditions more highly than the other, although this should be considered against the low response rate from support staff.

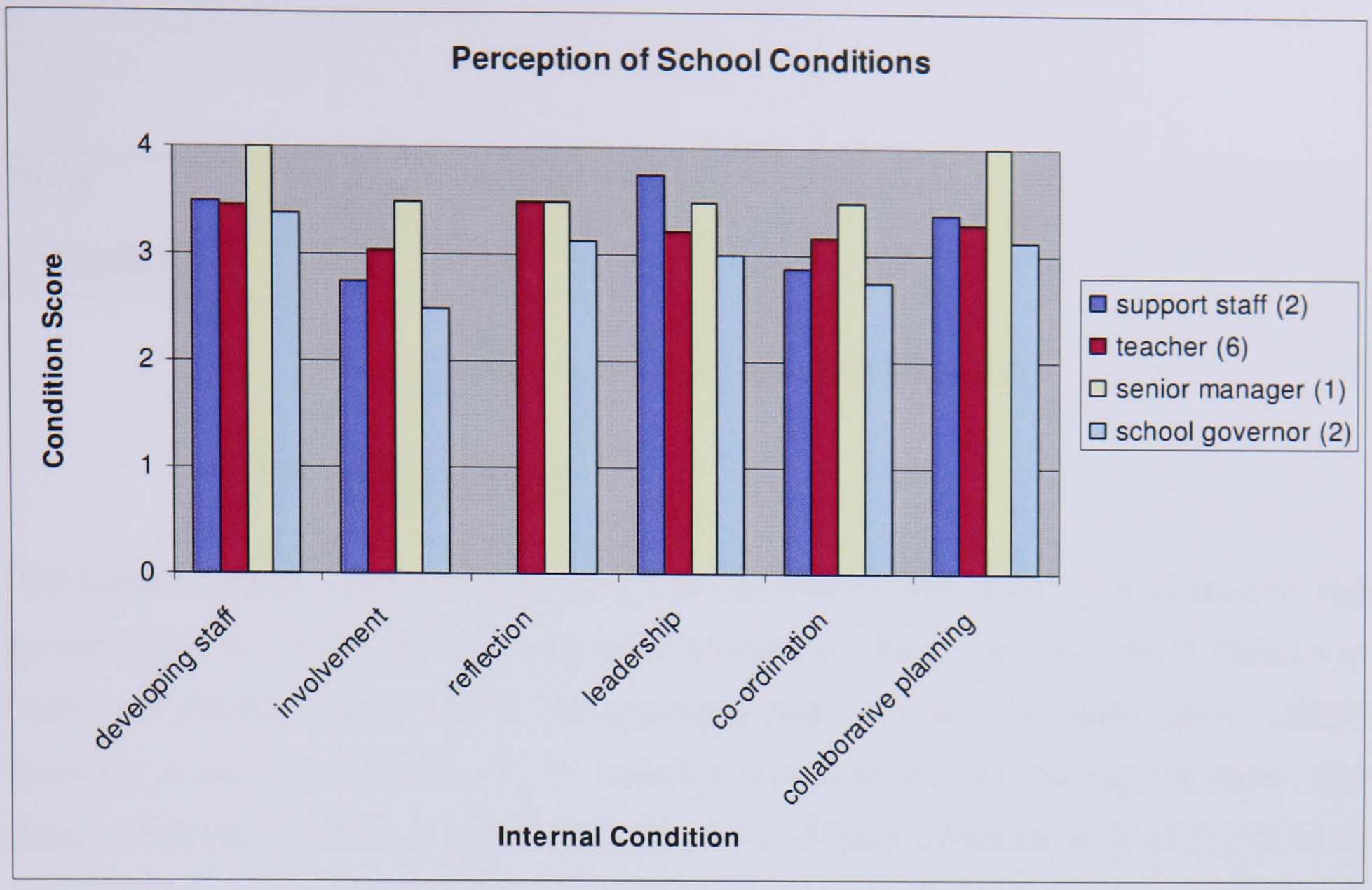

Figure 5-1 Chart showing stakeholder perceptions of Hall Gardens' internal conditions

5.1.3. Interviewees

With the exception of the headteacher, who was interviewed twice but not observed, the following staff (from a potential pool of nine) were interviewed twice and observed:

Name	Role	Gender	Contract
Dave (1200/2200)	Headteacher / Teacher	Male	Full time
Clare (1201/2201)	Year 2 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator / Senior Management Team	Female	Full time
Jane (1202/2202)	Year 1 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Mary (1203/2203)	Year 3 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Terri (1204/2204)	Year 6, later Year 5 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator / Key Stage Co-ordinator / Senior Management Team	Female	Full time

Betty (1205/2205)	Year 4 , later floating Teacher (NQT) / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time

Table 5-2 Interview participants at Hall Gardens

5.1.4. *PPA strategy*

Hall Garden adopted a mixed strategy based on two criteria: first, it had to be affordable; and second, it had to suit the children, who were sensitive to change, and the school, which was *"still in a fragile stage"* (1200). The approach took *"the most simplistic form"* (2200) involving a mixture of teacher cover (existing and external) and TA support cover. Six classes (Reception to Year 5) had 'Golden Hour' on a Friday afternoon, with a TA paid at an enhanced rate. In the Autumn term, Year 6 were receiving an hour of drumming tuition each week. For the second hour for Years 3 to 6, the headteacher took the classes individually for ICT. The three younger classes spent a half hour with the SENCO and the other half hour with their own TA as individual classes. The headteacher then covered all seven classes for the remaining half hour of PPA in two Key Stage sessions for Music. The approach continued throughout the year, although the headteacher was later replaced in Music sessions by the Music Co-ordinator, a temporary teacher.

The headteacher suggested quality of lessons was accounted for by having *"as low planning a threshold as possible."* (1200) and by avoiding academic subjects for PPA cover activities, although the value of this was questioned by one teacher: *"I don't know how much learning the children are experiencing from that situation."*(1204). There was also a general feeling among teachers that although some TAs coped well, others were ill equipped to deal with the demands of preparing for and taking a class of often difficult children. This meant that teachers often had extra planning to do *"which kind of defeats the object a little bit."* (1204).

5.2. Perceived Purpose and Outcomes

This section examines the themes emerging from interview data about the perceived *purpose* and the *outcomes* of PPA time. Details of data used, and how it was interpreted, is found in section 3.5.4, and an example is shown in Appendix 8. Perceived purposes of PPA emerged from the data as relating to two themes: 'work/life balance', and 'improving working'. Upon

analysis, perceived outcomes were (a) school outcomes: 'school's capacity to do something'; (b) teacher outcomes: 'teachers' capacities for things'; and (c) other outcomes.

5.2.1. Perceived purpose of PPA time

Teachers and the headteacher were asked for their perceptions about why the PPA time policy was put into place, and two themes arose for Hall Garden. This section elaborates further on these themes.

5.2.1.1. Work/life balance

The extra time provided by PPA was attributed with increasing teachers' free time on the weekend and making them *"more enthused and more energetic about their work."* (1201) Staff comments on the links between the policy and work-life balance were indicative of the increasing quantity of work teachers have become expected to do over the years and their hopes that this policy would go some way to lessening the strain on their lives outside of school:

"I think they must be aware how almost impossible a teacher's job is since the days of national curriculum being introduced and how much they expect us to actually record...My aim would be not to have to work at all at the weekend which, you know, I shouldn't have to do.." (1201)

5.2.1.2. Improved working

Although all teachers considered work/life balance to be the main purpose of the policy, towards the end of the year, an increasing number of teachers mentioned purposes other than enhancing teachers' home lives. One mentioned the ability to work collaboratively, and a second mentioned the ability to be better prepared, but neither linked these purposes directly to classroom benefits. A third proposed that improved work/life balance would allow teachers to better focus on children. Again, this was not linked to a specific classroom outcome. At the beginning of the year only one teacher had made this sort of comment, suggesting that enhanced work/life balance would readdress the problem that too much paperwork was *"taking away from your skills in the classroom"* (1201). In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of purpose
Round 1	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. Also to improve working.
Round 2	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. Increasingly to improve

	working.

Table 5-3 Summary of perceptions of purpose over the year

5.2.2. Perceived outcomes of PPA time

Teachers and the headteacher were asked for their perceptions about likely outcomes of PPA, and three themes emerged. This section elaborates further on themes.

5.2.2.1. Other outcomes

Three teachers chose 'any other' as the most likely outcome of PPA, while another placed it second. Under this heading all teachers anticipated improved social life or work-life balance; enhanced job satisfaction; or a happier school with teachers under less pressure. For example, *"The most immediate [thought is that it] is saving teachers' time spent at home. It's possibly about giving them more job satisfaction."* (1204)

5.2.2.2. School's capacity to do something

Teachers varied over their convictions that PPA would enhance the school's 'capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes', with comments ranging from *"certainly"* (1201), to *"possibly"* (1204), to *"hopefully"* (1205). For the headteacher, this was very much an unknown: *"I'm hoping as an outcome that pupils will actually gain and they won't lose. That's the big question mark at the moment."* (1200). PPA was not seen to enhance the school's capacity to 'manage and learn from change', which one teacher suggested *"I think we perhaps do that anyway!"* (1201). The 'school's capacity to sustain its own development' was considered relevant to this school in particular because of its challenging circumstances and difficult history: *"I think anything that they can give us that's going to support us is going to help us to improve."* (1201)

5.2.2.3. Teachers' capacities for things

Only one teacher anticipated PPA's primary outcomes in terms of enhancing individual teachers', or teams', capacities, naming *"reflection"* (1102) as the capability that would benefit most. She linked reflection to leadership capabilities; especially those relating to monitoring her subject area responsibilities and using her expertise to help other teachers in this area. In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of outcome
Round 1	Primarily 'other', then 'school', then 'teacher'.
Round 2	Mostly 'other', then 'school', then 'teacher'.

Table 5-4 Summary of perceptions of outcome over the year

5.3. Time

Interview questions relating to the 'effects' of PPA time brought forward 'time' as an emergent theme. This section examines 'time', in terms of both the way teachers spent their time, and the fact that PPA time provided time for certain activities. Table 3-10 shows the number of teachers completing diary studies. Due to time constraints, and the repetitious nature of the information, diaries were not completed in the summer term. Breakdown of time spend is shown in the figure below.

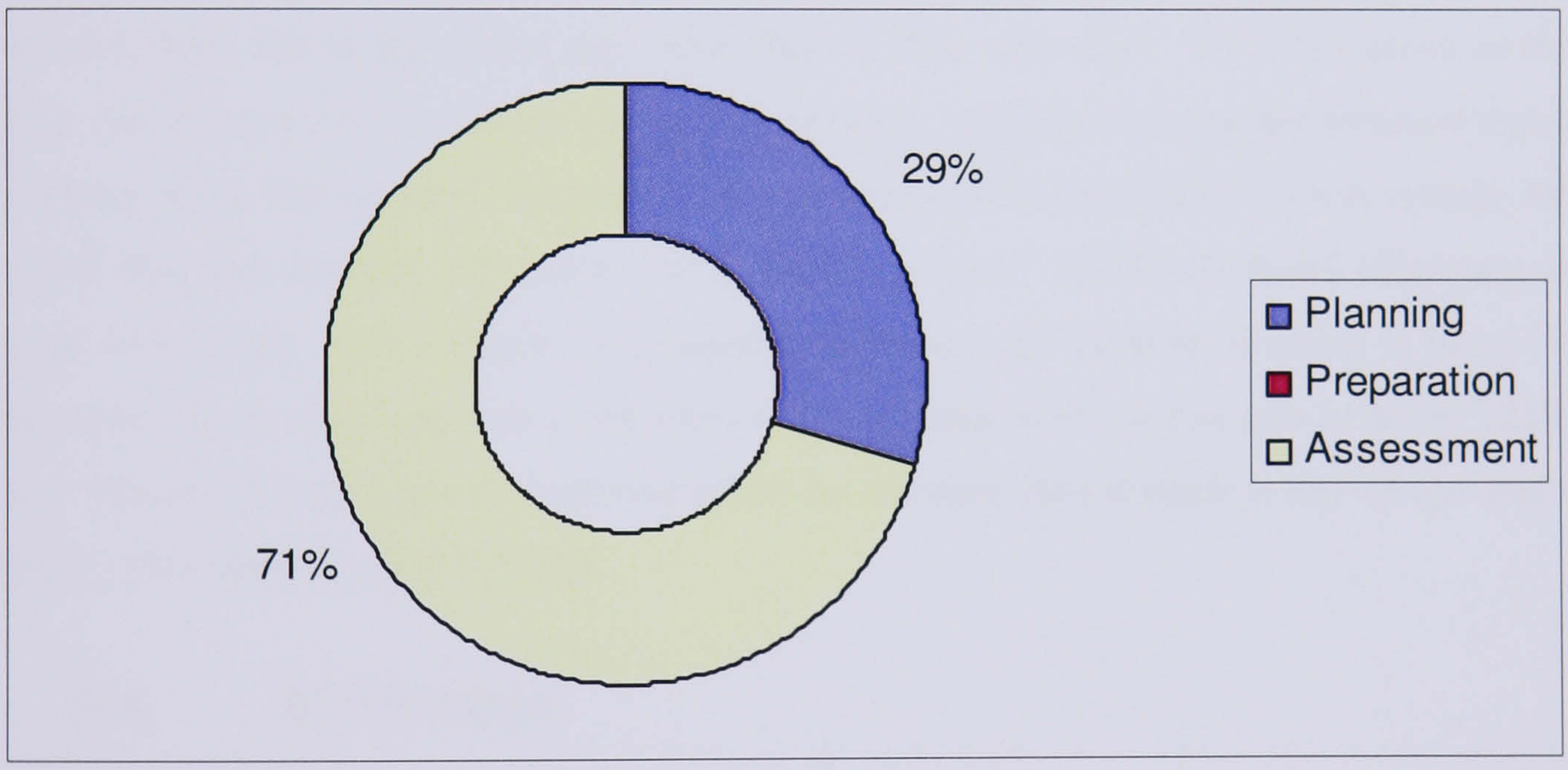

Figure 5-2 Analysis of term 1 diary studies at Hall Garden

5.3.1. Influences on how time is spent

In the Autumn term of the school's second year of implementation of PPA, all teachers were using some PPA time for planning. This was the favoured use of PPA time because it takes *"such a big chunk of my time"* (1203), was more demanding (1102) and the resources for planning were readily available in school. Preparation was seen as a less demanding task and so was accorded less of a priority than planning. The four weeks of PPA diary showed no evidence of preparation. Because assessment included observation and annotation of plans during lessons, as well as marking, some aspects of assessment more naturally occurred

outside of PPA time, and so did not generally perceive themselves to use PPA for assessment. With reference to the PPA diary submitted, this teacher spent increasing amounts of time on assessment over the first term; in fact, significantly more than planning.

By the summer, assessment had become much more important for two teachers, although they also spent time doing other things, such as work scrutinies (1204). The shift in use of time related in part to the cyclical nature of the job: *"There's times in the year when you need to [assess] more."* (2201). Diaries and interviews both made reference to occasions when PPA time had been lost due to absences or clashes with courses.

5.3.2. The effect of having extra time

As at Barfields, teachers frequently referred to PPA as *"extra time"*. There were a number of effects of having this extra time. The most common theme at Hall Garden was that teachers saved time from PPA, although predominantly in a like-for-like fashion, rather than through better efficiency. Teachers generally saw PPA as more time in which to get the same amount of work done, but in the school day rather than in their own time: *"PPA has given us more time, but it doesn't really change the way we operate."* (1204). One teacher believed that her working week had actually reduced as she gave herself a deadline to finish certain work within that time because *"I want to get it done in school."* (2205). Reduced efficiency also arose as a theme, with a couple of comments reflecting the value of working at home. For example: *"sometimes you can't concentrate to the same level as you can at home"*(2201), and *"[teachers have] openly admitted [that] by the time they'd made a cup of tea and sat down...[the time] is gone."* (2200).

5.4. Influences

The influences on provision of, and effects of, PPA time were examined under Stoll's (1999) framework, which gave three categories of influence: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher', and a number of sub-themes. Most of the sub-themes emerging from the research were naturally consistent with Stoll's sub-themes, although they varied in importance. At this school, one new sub-theme of the 'external influence' category was emergent. This was named 'inherent policy details'.

A second emergent finding was that influences could be identified as one of three types: 'qualifiers', 'enablers', and 'inhibitors' (section 4.4 discussed why these metaphors were used). The following sections set out all the influences at Hall Garden, grouping them under

the three main themes: external, school, and teacher. At the end of each section is a summary table.

5.4.1. External influences

Of Stoll's (1999) five external influences, only 'political action and tone' was considered influential here. A further emergent finding was that the policy itself bore influence. The following series of analytical statements explore each of the influences at Hall Garden:

Influence	Findings
Political action and tone	General financing was considered to be a highly significant issue at this school, because although *"if a school is full, it gets the right sort of money coming in."* (1200), this school was not full. Its problems were compounded by being served by the poorest funded Local Authority in the country. This influence 'inhibited' implementation of PPA.
Inherent policy details	Extra time meant teachers could keep on top of their work and spend more time reflecting on that work should they wish. Having time within *"office hours"* (2102) was valuable for communication with people both inside and outside of the school. Further, the policy made teachers *"feel more valued"* (2201).

Table 5-5 External influences at Hall Garden

5.4.2. School influences

Of Stoll's nine school level influences, eight were perceived as influential here, as shown below. Power issues did not emerge as significant. There were no emergent findings at school-level:

Influence	Findings
History	The headteacher saw funding *"due to size and numbers; funding due to the history due to the problems within the school; and [funding of the Local] Authority."* (1200) as being a historical problem. Most immediately, the school's budget for the following year depended on numbers on roll. Funding affected a variety of areas, including expenditure of PPA cover, and therefore strategy, availability of leadership time for teachers separate to PPA, and likelihood of bringing in external people to help expand the curriculum. In the sense that finances had direct detrimental effects on the impact of PPA (such as external support) it was an 'inhibitor'. Size of the school affected PPA arrangements in that as a

	single intake school teachers *"more or less have to work on our own most of the time, for PPA."* (1201) Size, as an influencer of funding was, therefore, an inhibitor. The school's historical position as an improving school was an 'enabler' in the sense that small improvements *"can make a difference between what's satisfactory and what's good."* (2200).
Culture	An 'ethos' of co-operation was already perceived to be present at the school, enhanced by the opportunity for working together afforded by the PPA room. For instance, teachers *"who we don't normally have time to talk to or reason to talk to"* (1102) from opposite ends of the school could, in theory, meet during PPA and work on developing subject area. This culture was an 'enabler'.
Mix of pupils	The particular mix of children had the potential to constrain the way in which PPA was implemented and thus, its potential benefits. In one particular class *"there are a lot of children with real problems...So the children don't benefit because it unsettles them"* (1102). This was the worst case, but it was the case across the school that although TAs could not offer the same academic expertise, depth of knowledge or range of skills as a specialist teacher, the children here needed the routine provided by a familiar TA covering. Further causing this strategy to be adopted without contest was the fact that parents were much less vocal about school management issues than perhaps those in a more affluent area (1200). Regardless of whether the school's strategy emerges as positive, as a limiting factor on possible strategies this factor would be considered an inhibitor.
Leadership	The head, as a leader, had some influence over PPA time activities, as did the leadership roles of particular teachers, compounded by historical priorities within the school which meant monitoring and assessment were key foci for teachers. Historical funding problems also meant staff did not always get release time for their own subject area. With this in mind, some chose to carry out leadership tasks within their PPA time *"whether it be a scrutiny of work or to observe a particular session"* (2200). For the others, the headteacher steered staff discussions by suggesting leadership jobs they could choose to do within their PPA time. He also put forward that the flexibility and goodwill shown by staff, in giving up their PPA time when necessary, was in part a reflection upon *"leadership and management"* (2200). The influence of leadership could be described as 'enabling' the implementation and benefits of PPA.
Structures	PPA arrangements were affected by the size of the school; with single intake year groups. The negative effect of size was somewhat alleviated by construction of a room specifically for PPA time, which allowed

	teachers to work in proximity to one another during the Friday PPA session they had in common. Accommodation was therefore an 'enabler', with the timing of PPA's longer block altogether on a Friday acting as a 'qualifier' to this accommodation allowing collaboration. The timing of PPA affected activities carried out, and their effectiveness. One teacher said a single block of time would be more motivating (2203). Shorter periods of time were perhaps less useful because *"an hour disappears quickly, and half an hour even more so."* (2200) The headteacher believed that assessment tended to be carried out in the longer sessions, which *"they all prefer"* (2200). The Friday session, spent together, meant staff could collaborate should they need to, especially once the PPA room was built. The shorter sessions were 'inhibitors' on the usefulness of PPA. Further, the occasional irregularity of PPA provision did not help motivation (2203) adding to the 'inhibiting' nature of timing. A further factor relating to structures was the use of support staff for cover, which was a 'qualifier'. For details on this, see section below on support staff.
Teacher relationships	The head believed that the presence of good working relationships, consciously developed over time in the school, would enable staff to work together more fruitfully during PPA time in the sense that they were willing to spend time discussing things. The benefits of PPA time would thus be maximised as time spent together developed staff knowledge and skills, and thus, their teaching ability. Enhanced teaching ability was seen as key here to improvement within the school as it would lead to *"a higher grading of good, rather than satisfactory lessons"* (1200). Furthermore, positive TA / teacher relationships meant there would be *"little shock...because they work [together] all day and plan together anyway."* (1200), thus, making teacher relationships an 'enabler'.
Morale	The current circumstances of the school (history) and *"where we've come from and where we've got to...have welded the team together."* (1200). This positive effect on relationships has led to positive morale, which is now *"quite buoyant"*. The head linked morale with an awareness that what happened during PPA time, both in terms of the teacher and the class, needed to be accounted for so that their hard work was not undermined. (1200). Morale was therefore an 'enabler'.
Support staff	The use of support staff to cover much of PPA came about through two main influences: funding at the school (affected by size); and the particular mix of children. Given that existing TAs were used, there were a number of benefits. Firstly, the headteacher believed their self esteem

	would increase. He saw this as having potentially positive repercussions in terms of their sense of commitment to the school, and their confidence. Secondly, in this school in particular, TAs were in a better position to be able to control behaviour, and their presence minimised disruption to a group of children averse to change. Thirdly, the strategy was sustainable in the long term *"because we're doing it within our existing resources"*. (1200) For these reasons, and because implementation of PPA would have been problematic without them, support staff were seen by the headteacher as 'qualifiers'. The detrimental effects of time without the classroom teacher were seen as *"a balance"* (2204), which was necessary for PPA to work.

Table 5-6 School influences at Hall Garden

5.4.3. ***Teacher influences***

Of Stoll's eight teacher influences, three were seen as influential here (commitment, skills, experience), and there was one emergent finding: 'use of PPA time'.

Influence	Findings
Commitment	The headteacher commented that the flexibility and goodwill of staff *"enable it to work"*, but suggested that this was influenced by leadership (2200). The influence of staff commitment, demonstrated here by their flexibility and goodwill, could be described as 'enabling' the implementation and benefits of PPA, while acknowledging the wider influence of leadership.
Skills	The headteacher did not distinguish explicitly between 'knowledge' and 'skills' but suggested that these were important because, knowledgeable and skilled staff could extend their expertise through PPA time. (1200). The influence of knowledge and skills, however, was amplified by the presence of good working relationships, which the headteacher hoped would further enhance knowledge. The school's recent emergence from Special Measures meant a lot had to change in terms of teacher morale and skill. The headteacher suggested this was a strong influence on what PPA might achieve because where there are large gaps for improvement *"little [changes] can make a difference between what's satisfactory and what's good."* (2200). These skill gaps could thus be seen as enablers.
Life and career	In the experience of one teacher, meetings relating to her leadership role occasionally caused her to miss out on PPA time. She saw this as being

experiences (role)	demotivating (2203). In this one case, this influence would be an 'inhibitor'. For those teachers spending more time on leadership role related tasks, however, such as assessment, (due in part to the larger influence of leadership), the influence of 'role' would be seen as an 'enabler'. Certain things, such as thorough planning, were expected of teachers. This inhibited the extent to which PPA was perceived to improve these processes.
Use of time	PPA was seen to positively enhance co-ordination, reflection, and collaborative planning by enabling teachers to carry out certain activities including feedback to children; discussion with other teachers; subject area monitoring; and working on targets discussed in staff meetings.

Table 5-7 Teacher influences at Hall Garden

The following table gives an overall summary of influences on PPA's effects. As for the Barfields study, the table includes an 'Affected by' column, which shows that certain influences upon PPA's effects were themselves *perceived to be* influenced by other factors. The key influences at Hall Garden were the mix of pupils, leadership, the school's history, and funding.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES			Q	E	I
Political action/tone					
	Funding	Size			✓
Inherent policy details					
	In the working day			✓	
	Extra time			✓	
	Sense of valuing teachers			✓	
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
Culture					
	Positive			✓	
History					
	Size	Mix of pupils			✓
	Improvement	Leadership		✓	
	Finances				✓
Mix of pupils					
	Problem children				✓
Leadership					
	Influence over activities			✓	
Structures					
	Accommodation			✓	
	PPA strategy (cover)	Funding, mix of pupils	✓		
	Timing of PPA		✓		✓
Morale		History		✓	
Relationships		Leadership, history		✓	

Support staff					
	Sustainable	Funding, mix of pupils	✓		
	Familiar with pupils		✓		
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Commitment		Leadership		✓	
Skills					
	Skill gap	History		✓	
Experience (role)					
	Role limits perceived effects				✓
	Leadership role impinges				✓
	Helps leadership role			✓	
Use of PPA time					
	Coaching			✓	
	Feedback			✓	
	Subject area monitoring			✓	
	Meeting staff meeting targets			✓	

Table 5-8 Summary of influences on PPA's implementation at Hall Garden

In summary, there were few external influences on PPA, a range of school influences, and most of the teacher related influences were enablers.

5.5. Effects

5.5.1. General trends

As in the previous case study, a visual representation of perceived effects is shown in the following two charts (Figure 5-3, Figure 5-4), where bar length corresponds to the number of respondents, and bars above the x-axis represent positive answers. The two charts are very similar in shape, demonstrating that in general, if PPA was perceived to give rise to a certain effect, teachers in this school had no reason to suggest that this would not continue into the future. Further, where answers changed between 'now' and 'future', in most cases these reflect more definite positive answers in the future. In this school, teachers generally considered practice would enhance their use of PPA time.

Bars on the two charts (Figure 5-3, Figure 5-4) oscillate about the x-axis so that certain groups of effects were perceived as happening and certain groups were not. From left to right along the charts: PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, co-ordination, reflection, collaborative planning, learning community, programme coherence, external support, processes, and human resources. It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, leadership, or resources at this school.

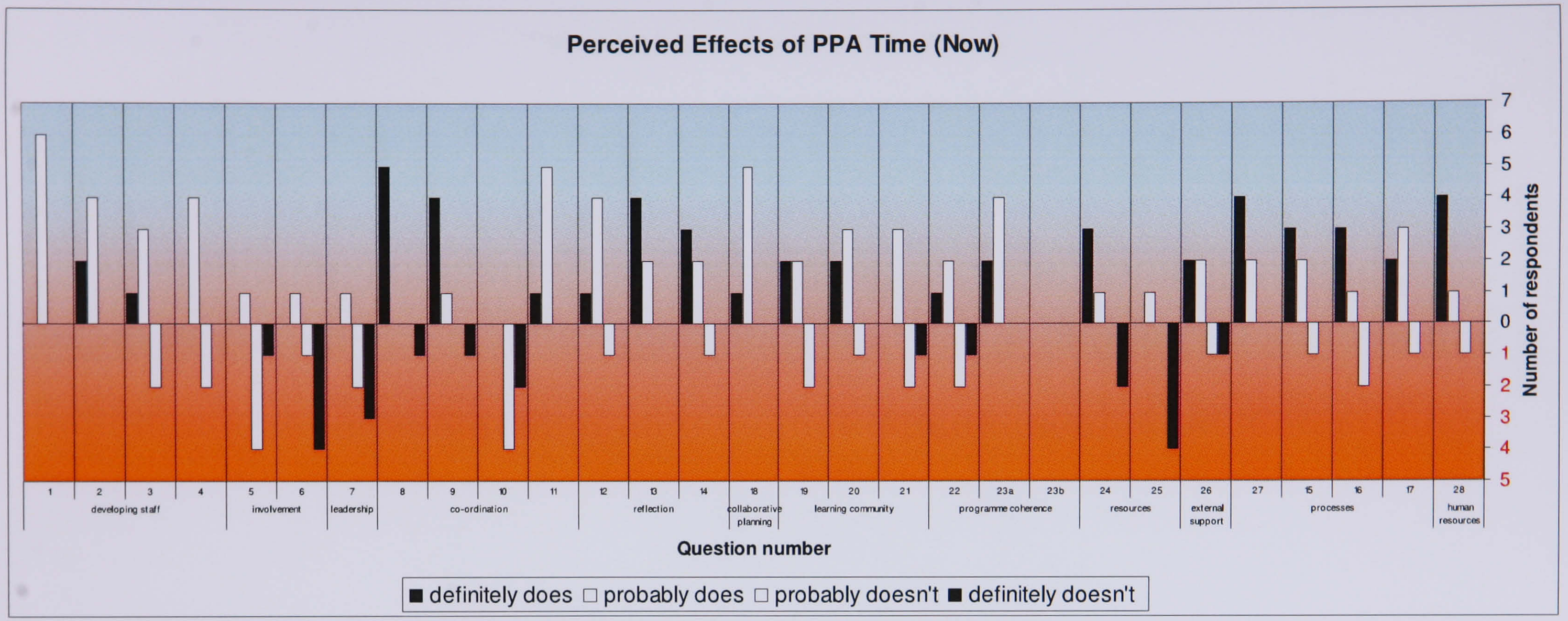

Figure 5-3 The effects PPA is perceived to have now.

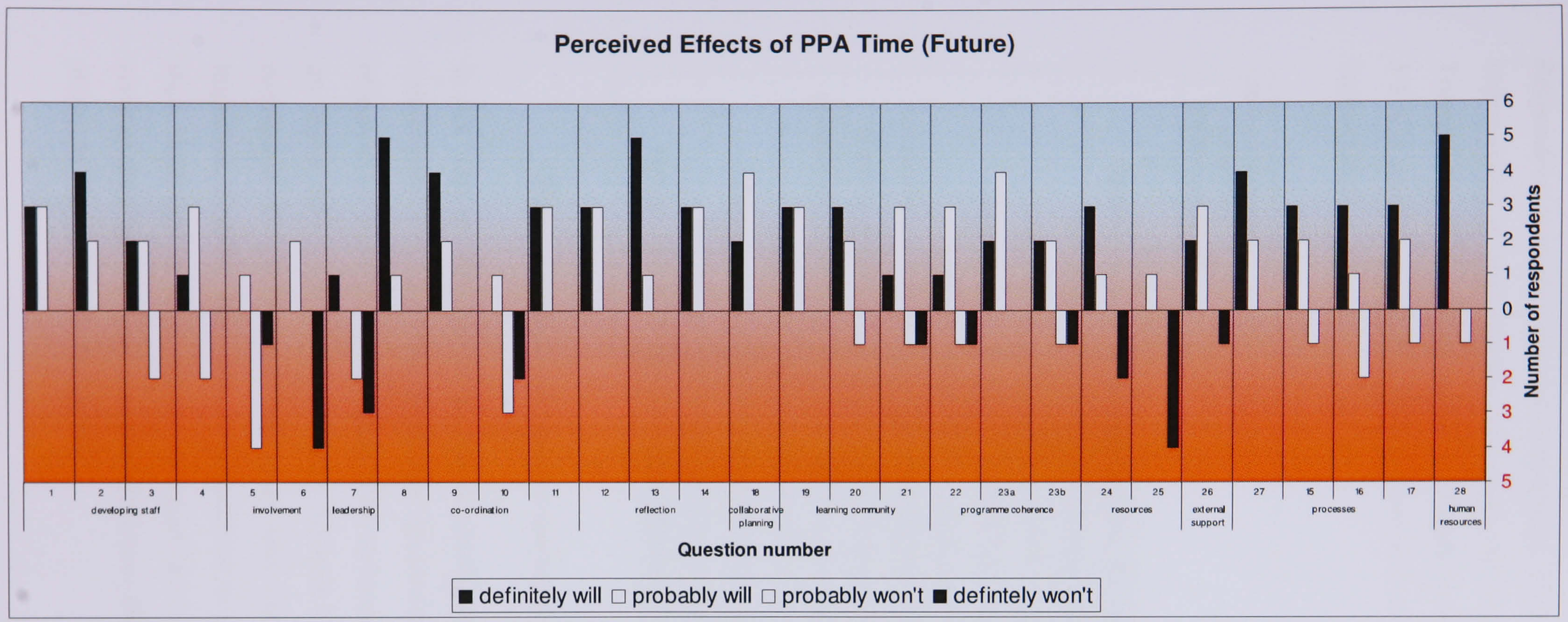

Figure 5-4 The effects PPA may have in the future

The following twelve sections discuss respondents' perceptions of why each of these effects were seen to arise, or not, from PPA (thus relating 'effects' to their 'influences'). Respondents were also asked to comment on the importance of each of the twelve effects for improvement at Hall Garden. The chart below (Figure 5-5) is an analysis of responses. Triangulating this with the school conditions survey results, and with Figure 5-3 and Figure 5-4 it is possible to see that PPA is perceived to improve the school in areas necessary for improvement.

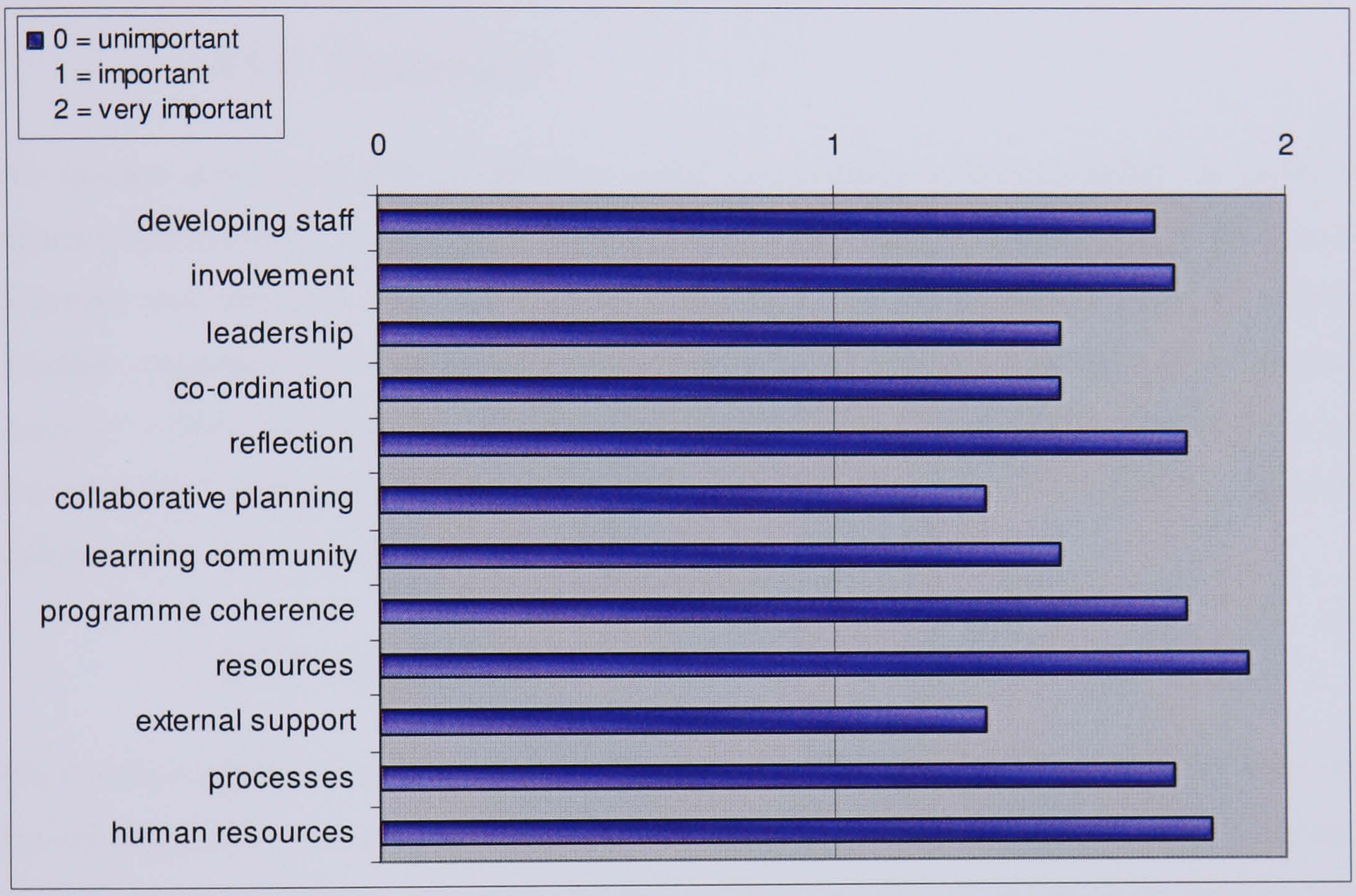

Figure 5-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement

In line with the findings of the school conditions survey, which showed involvement and collaborative planning to be the poorest rated areas (Figure 5-1), Figure 5-5 shows both these effects to be perceived as important areas to focus on if the school is to improve (score ≥ 1 on Figure 5-5). Comparison of Figure 5-5 with Figure 5-3 and Figure 5-4 shows PPA was considered to impact positively upon nine out of twelve of those effects considered important. Notably, PPA was not considered to impact (on the whole) upon resources, the most important of these effects, or upon involvement and leadership. The following 12 sections draw on interview data to explain how PPA was perceived to bring about the effects shown in Figure 5-3 and Figure 5-4.

5.5.2. Developing staff

PPA's provision of *"more time"* (2201; 2204), particularly to spend on assessment, but also to learn, *"research things more"* (1200), and be better prepared in general, meant teachers considered it to improve their skills, or at the very least *"to do it as you know it should be done"* (2201). The way PPA time had been organised, allowing teachers to work collaboratively and to share ideas and expertise, was also a contributing factor at Hall Garden.

5.5.3. Involvement

No teacher considered PPA to enhance pupil involvement or responsibility. In terms of parental involvement, two teachers commented that free time could be spent with parents, although one admitted *"this is hypothetical because I haven't actually done it"* (2202). Another suggested PPA may improve the feedback to parents *"when I have a parents' evening"* (1204), although the common view was that *"PPA time doesn't change [parental involvement]"* (2204). Improvements in parental involvement could, therefore, be said to be influenced by use of teachers' time.

5.5.4. Leadership

No teacher considered PPA to enhance their responsibility over decisions. As they were not specifically asked to work collaboratively *"We tend to work on our own during PPA time"* (1204). A couple of comments reflected the potential benefits of collaborative working that might arise from the shared PPA room, and the headteacher considered PPA's provision of opportunity for discussing issues with colleagues should involve them more in decision making. For example,*"if you know you're not the only one who feels something really strongly, then it will give you more confidence to say something, and possibly it could be changed"* (1205).

5.5.5. Co-ordination

PPA was seen to have a positive effect on co-ordination, particularly because of the positive 'ethos' of co-operation present at the school already, and enhanced by the opportunity for collaboration afforded by the PPA room. For instance, teachers *"who we don't normally have time to talk to or reason to talk to"* (1102) could meet during PPA and work on developing subject area. Extra time also meant that *"the more we achieve with PPA on a personal basis...[we'll have] a little bit more time to actually move out and share with others."* (2201). Formalisation of communication was not seen to arise through PPA because

of the size of the school where *"there's not many of us anyway so I don't think we need to formalise it."* (2102).

5.5.6. Reflection

Through discussions held during PPA, and the visibility of support staff covering PPA, teachers noticed the strengths of others more readily *"for example: [a teacher might say] Oh, do you know that Laura did a fantastic piece of artwork?"* (2205). PPA also allowed teachers more time to work on their leadership areas, to look at assessment data, and to assess areas identified as key across the school, *"For example, we've got Writing as a big focus now"* (2204), although these were dependent upon how they spent their time. One teacher considered these improvements more of an opportunity for larger schools where teachers could discuss these sorts of things as a group during PPA (2203), however.

5.5.7. Collaborative planning

Teachers considered PPA to help with school-wide target setting; particularly due to the extra time it provided. One teacher commented that it allowed her to look closer at what had been *"skimmed over in the staff meeting"* (2205) in relation to this issue, and so PPA could be seen to have had an indirect effect, strengthening the benefits of existing collaboration.

5.5.8. Learning community

PPA was generally considered to have a positive effect on the staff as a learning community. Firstly, staff had more of an opportunity to collaborate, although as one teacher said, this was theoretical: *"If you wanted to you could arrange it so that you were working with somebody else."* (2102). Secondly, over time, the majority of staff considered it to assist their reflection, because *"you're seeing the bigger picture because you've got more time, you're not so stressed, rushing around."* (2102). Thirdly, some staff considered PPA had enhanced their level of influence, through its provision of time for them to fit more tasks in, in a more reflective way (2200), and because of its location within the school day allowing teachers *"time on the premises...It's useful for communication."* (2102).

5.5.9. Programme coherence

PPA generally was seen to have a positive effect on programme coherence, particularly in terms of helping sustain improvement at the school, through monitoring and assessment. In terms of its own sustainability, teachers were generally confident PPA would be sustainable because cover was sourced *"from within."* (2200), and because of the statutory nature of the

policy. Finances could make sustainability of PPA *"very difficult"* (2201) in the immediate future, however, as could the impending loss of a staff member providing cover, which was mentioned by two teachers. In practical terms, the task of covering PPA would fall to the headteacher, and this would make PPA much more sporadic: *"If he has to go away for a meeting, members of staff will just lose their PPA. Or he'll have to get a Supply in to cover it. But when the school's running at a deficit anyway, how are you going to be able to afford it?"* (2205).

5.5.10. Resources

PPA was not seen to benefit resources overall. It had a positive effect, when used for resourcing, in the sense that *"staff have the time to be able to find what they need, access it..."* (2200). In terms of finances, however, most teachers considered PPA to be detrimental. In terms of value for money, the headteacher suggested teachers could put in interventions and buy resources in a more considered, whole-school way, looking at finances and making sure that *"we use them correctly, that we don't over buy things...financially it gives people more ownership of what they're doing"* (2200). Another teacher suggested value for money was not provided here because of the occasional irregularity of PPA, and the numbers of children in classes: *"I think they are having 2½ hours less quality teaching, because of how it's covered in this school."* (2102).

5.5.11. External support

PPA was generally seen as having a positive effect on external support because it allowed teachers *"more time"* (2201) within *"office hours"* (2102) to be *"more creative in their planning"* (2200) and to bring in people to deliver lessons, or to arrange external visits. Another teacher suggested finances stood in the way of bringing people in currently, but that in the future the school may afford to.

5.5.12. Processes

PPA was seen as having a positive effect on processes because of the time it provided for assessment (2200, 2203), communication (2204), and more in-depth planning (1205, 2204), to include *"time to reflect on last week's [plans]."* (1102). One process it improved was leadership area monitoring: *"Things like my work scrutinies and planning scrutinies. It enables that to be done regularly and that feeds back to the staff and back into the whole school system."* (2201). Earlier in the year, one teacher had commented how these processes were part of their role anyway: *"It's just something that I always do."*(1204).

5.5.13. Human resources

PPA was attributed with positively affecting staff motivation to ensure that when *"You put your time and effort into a lesson...you make it a good lesson"*, thereby motivating children (2205). One teacher summed it up thus: *"I think the whole thing has just made me feel more valued. I get satisfaction because I can do my job better."* (2201) although another pointed out more consistency *"and if it was in [one] block of time"* (2203) would go further to ensuring motivation.

5.6. Capacity

5.6.1. Does PPA build capacity?

All teachers considered PPA to build capacity, although two believed there was at least some loss on the part of the children. For example, *"In some ways 'yes', and in some ways 'no'...The answer to the question is 'yes' on a personal level...The overall effect is that ...what children are getting in some ways they're losing in other ways, so it's a balance"* (2204). Respondents equated a range of effects of PPA to capacity building, including the building in of *"greater expectation"* (2200), time spent in *"consultation with other staff"* (2201), and improved planning quality. Interestingly, two teachers also linked their own *"better quality of life"* (2203) to the school's capacity for improvement, although did not comment on the means by which the one affected the other.

5.6.2. What is capacity building?

Everyone interviewed defined capacity building in terms of areas in which the school had room to improve. These were not necessarily academic opportunities, but nevertheless represented a 'gap' between where the school currently sat, and a situation where all children's needs were met. For example, *"it would mean things like giving each child what they need in the way of their learning."* (2201), and *"You might mean in a specific area; you might mean in terms of perhaps levels achieved; or you might mean in terms of what a broad and balanced curriculum the children have access to; or you might mean in terms of staff needing extra training where there might be a weakness in certain areas."* (2204). Another teacher also suggested the benefit of existing staff could be better utilised with *"a bit more training"* (2202).

The headteacher mentioned continuous improvement as an indicator of a school with capacity to improve and an important feature of improvement was that it had to be

sustainable: *"One of OfSTED's questions is: "Does this school have the capacity to improve?...Are they looking at ways they can continually improve?""* (2200); and *"We need to improve, to continue to improve."* (2203).

5.7. Summary

5.7.1. Strategy

Hall Garden took a mixed approach involving a variety of teacher cover (existing and external) and TA support cover. Cover was linked to specific lessons, such as Golden Hour, IT, and Music, and the planning threshold was kept to a minimum.

5.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

Themes emerging about the perceived *purpose* of the policy were work/life balance, and improved working. Throughout the year, work/life balance dominated as the perceived purpose although some teachers were recognising that improvements in school-related activities, and the ability to focus and to work collaboratively were also part of its purpose. Notably, these aspects of its purpose were never related to a higher purpose such as raising attainment or enhancing learning.

At both ends of the year, other outcomes, namely work/life balance were considered most likely to result from PPA, followed by 'school outcomes', and then 'teacher outcomes'. Perceptions of *purpose* and *outcomes* fitted fairly closely together, in that the dominant perceived purpose was also the dominant perceived outcome.

5.7.3. Time

Four reasons explained why planning tended to dominate PPA time: the volume of planning required (which was particularly heavy this year), its demanding nature, the availability of resources in school, and the fact that some assessment activities occurred naturally outside of PPA. Choice of activity was further dependent on the time of year, the day on which PPA fell, and the length of PPA time.

Typically teachers saved time in a like-for-like manner, working in the school day rather than in their own time. Reduced efficiency also emerged as a theme. It was not uncommon for teachers to use this time for school-related activities, however, with some teachers fitting in work that had previously been postponed.

5.7.4. Influences

Relating to Table 5-8, key findings were as follows:

- The individual teachers had the most apparent directly positive effect on PPA time implementation and benefits, in the sense that most were cited as 'enablers'.
- School-level influences were perhaps the most significant, particularly the mix of pupils, the school's history, and its leadership, because these impacted on other influences. For example, teaching quality and pupil achievement aside, the low attainment abilities of pupils (due to background) was one factor keeping new pupils, and subsequent funding away from the school.
- The mix of children also influenced the school's use of support staff to cover PPA time, and therefore the potential benefits of PPA time.
- Although it influenced other 'influences', mix of pupils was not a *direct* influence on any of the effects of PPA, as seen in Table 5-9, below.

5.7.5. Effects

The summary table below shows the effects PPA was seen to have, or not to have, at this school according to interview evidence; and the sorts of influences impacting upon whether or not they were associated with PPA. Ticks represent an influence that had a positive impact upon a particular effect. Crosses represent an influence that had a negative bearing on an effect. Pertinent findings were that:

- PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, co-ordination, reflection, collaborative planning, learning community, programme coherence, external support, processes, and human resources, which tied in fairly closely with those areas considered important for improvement at this school.
- It was not generally perceived to positively effect involvement, leadership, co-ordination, or learning community at this school; all of which were also considered important for improvement here.
- Of the effects associated with PPA, key influences were policy details, structures, and teachers' use of PPA time.
- Structures also had a negative influence on perceived effects.

					Effects of PPA												
					Associated with PPA										Not associated with PPA		
		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor	Developing staff	Co-ordination	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Programme coherence	External support	Processes	Human resources		Involvement	Leadership	Resources
External	Political action/tone			✓													
	Inherent policy details		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ✗	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓ ✗
School	Culture		✓			✓											
	History		✓	✓		✗	✗			✓ ✗	✗						
	Mix of pupils			✓													
	Leadership		✓														
	Structures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓ ✗						✓ ✗	✗
	Morale		✓														
	Relationships		✓														
	Support staff	✓					✓			✓							
Teacher	Commitment		✓														
	Skills		✓														
	Experiences (Role)		✓				✓					✓					
	Use of time		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✗			✓

Table 5-9 Summary of links between 'influences' and 'effects'

5.7.6. Capacity building

PPA was considered to build capacity, all things considered, particularly through its provision of extra time for improved working, and opportunities for collaboration. Ideas on what 'capacity for improvement' might mean centered around the notion of a 'gap' between the school's current provision for pupils, and their needs.

6. Analysis School 3 – Meadows First School

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the third case study, Meadows First School. This case follows the same layout as previous cases, so repetition of explanations will be kept to a minimum. A summary of key findings concludes the chapter.

6.1.1. School pupil context

	Total number of pupils on roll	Pupils eligible for KS2 tests	Total number and percentage of pupils with SEN				Average Key Stage 1 Point Score (Reading, Writing, Maths)
			with statements		without statements		
			Number	%	Number	%	
LA Average				5.30		16.10	
England Average				3.30		15.90	15.5
Meadows First	199	0	3	1.60	33	16.58	16.0

	% half days missed due to	
	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
LA Average	5.60	0.20
England Average	5.10	0.40
Meadows First	5.10	0.30

Table 6-1 Attainment table, Meadows First. Source: (DfES, 2005a, OfSTED, 2006a, OfSTED, 2005b)

OfSTED last inspected this First school in 2005, at the commencement of this research. Information was taken from that report. National and LA information was taken from OfSTED's 2005 attainment tables, and from the Panda Report of another First school that showed national figures. At the time of writing, pupils came from a very broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds. According to OfSTED (2005b) children's attainment on entry to the school was below average but this was raised throughout their time there to being above expected level. Pupils were seen to be very keen to learn, and teaching was very good. Excellent leadership and management was noted. The past five years had been a period of growth for this school, which proved financially challenging due to fluctuating class numbers. Once fully subscribed, the situation was eased and the headteacher described a positive financial situation. Staffing was stable, having grown gradually to meet the needs of the expanding school. This meant that a full complement of levels of teaching experience

was present. Classes were of mixed age group, with three Key Stage 1 and three KS2 teachers.

6.1.2. School conditions

The School Conditions Survey (see section 3.5.3.4) yielded a 69% rate of return (n=31) from a respondent population as shown in Table 3-9. The chart below demonstrates a picture within this school that aggregate scores for all conditions fell between 'often' (3 on the Y-axis) and 'nearly always' (4). For all areas, variance was limited between 'sometimes' (2) and 'nearly always', with nobody giving a score of 'rarely' (1) for any area. It can be seen that the higher scores tended to be given by those in leadership.

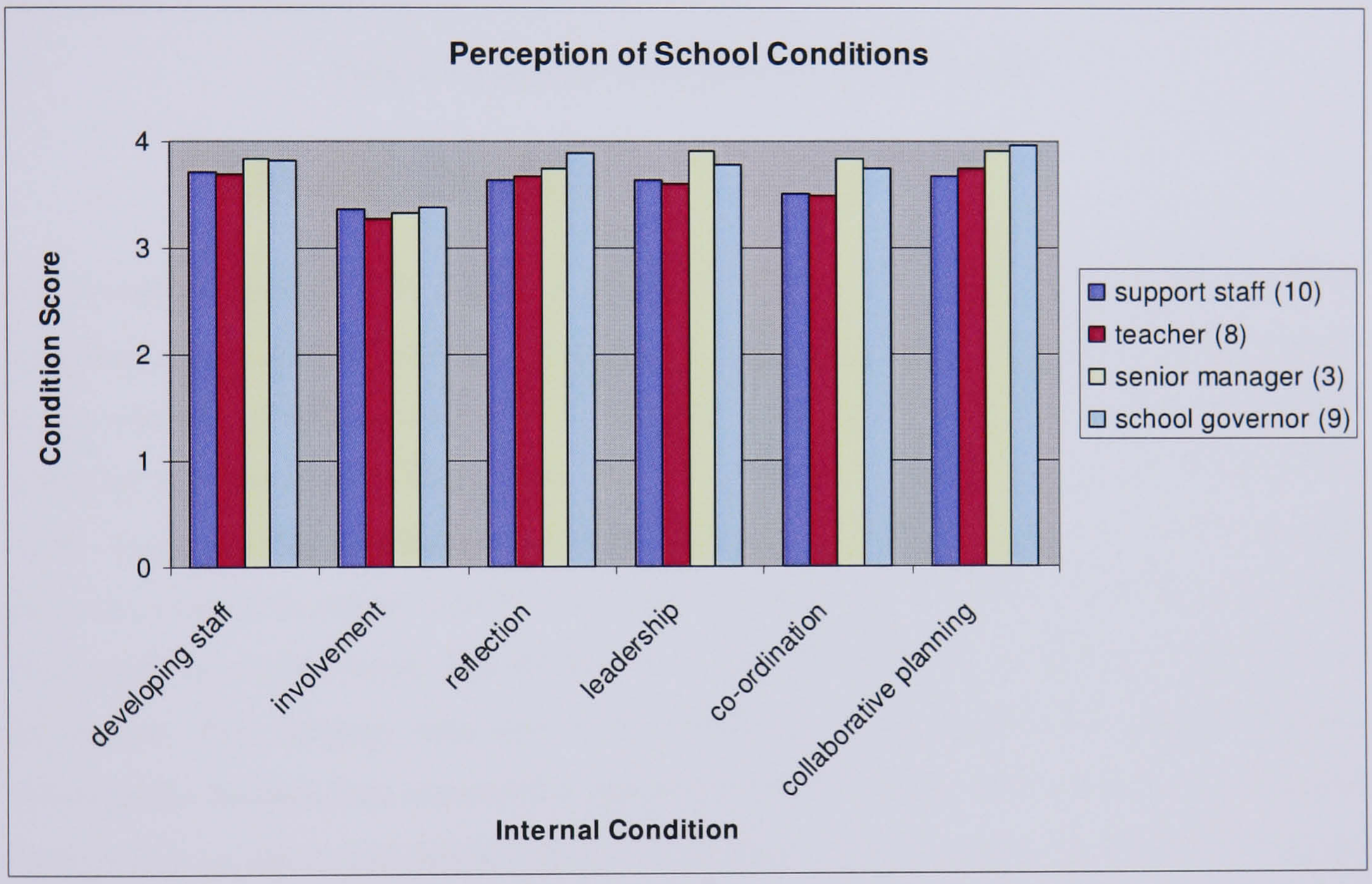

Figure 6-1 Chart showing stakeholder perceptions of Meadows' internal conditions

6.1.3. Interviewees

With the exception of the headteacher, who was interviewed twice but not observed, the following staff (from a potential pool of eight teachers) were interviewed twice and observed:

Name	Role	Gender	Contract
Louise (1300/2300)	Headteacher	Female	Full time

Jenny (1301/2301)	Year 1/2 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Angela (1302/2302)	Year 1/2 Teacher / SENCO	Female	Full time
Cathy (1303/2303)	Year 3/4 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator / Key Stage Co-ordinator / Senior Management Team	Female	Full time
Beverley (1304/2304)	Year R Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator / Key Stage Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Diane (1305/2305)	Year 1/2 Teacher (NQT) / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time

Table 6-2 Interview participants at Meadows First.

6.1.4. PPA Strategy

As an early adopter of PPA time, the school adopted it ad hoc initially, using Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) to cover classes. From September 2005 the school adopted a single strategy involving two HLTAs delivering Specified Work across the curriculum, releasing teachers in Key Stage pairs. Each set of teachers had PPA time revolving on a 4-week cycle in order that teachers maintained control of all subjects. Some extra planning time was created in school also in order that HLTAs could be paid to work with Key Stage teams and have some input. The HLTAs were then responsible for preparation and delivery of lessons. This strategy was said to be preferable to employment of supply teachers, although the headteacher expressed a desire to bring in of specialist teachers to boost areas such as P.E. or Music but had had difficulty finding the right people. HLTAs were seen as a positive option for cover because as well as being described by OfSTED as *"outstanding"* (1300), they were also *"absolutely 100% sold on the success of this school"*.

6.2. Perceived Purpose and Outcomes

As for the previous two studies, this section examines the themes emerging about the *purpose* and the *outcomes* of PPA time.

6.2.1. Perceived purpose of PPA time

6.2.1.1. Work/life balance

Generally there was a sense that the policy served a mixture of purposes and was perhaps equally oriented towards improving work-life balance and raising standards. At the beginning of the year, some staff comments on the purpose of the policy were indicative of teachers' increasing workload and that *"[the government] were under huge pressure to get people to stay in teaching"* (1301).

6.2.1.2. Standards

The word 'standards' was mentioned explicitly by a couple of teachers discussing the purpose of PPA at the beginning of the year. Extra time allowed for more key activities and personalising learning. Several comments indicated this time was even more valuable to teachers because they were given the opportunity to work collaboratively during their PPA time: *"you can actually really bounce off more ideas with each other...because you have got that additional time."* (1304). Towards the end of the year, teachers were unanimous and single minded in their belief that PPA was a tool to improve their teaching practice, with equal emphasis given to all three elements of PPA time by all five teachers, and improvement associated with collaborative working by three of the five.

6.2.1.3. Work/life balance leading to standards

The headteacher acknowledged the potentially enormous benefits to the school of having more well rested teachers*: "I want them to have some energy and to feel that they are valued enough and that they can do a good enough job in the week to improve pupil learning. I suppose the pupil learning is at the heart of it."* (1300). She further wanted collaborative practices developed during PPA to foster an environment of peer coaching, thereby improving standards. A teacher linked reduced stress to enhanced mental state: *"It makes you feel more valued. You don't always feel you are chasing your tail any more, so you actually feel that you get some constructive work done in school"* (2304). In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of purpose
Round 1	Predominantly work / life balance for retention and for standards. Also to raise standards.
Round 2	Predominantly for raising standards through improved processes. Also for work / life balance.

Table 6-3 Summary of perceptions of purpose over the year

6.2.2. Perceived outcomes of PPA time

6.2.2.1. School's capacity to do something

In terms of the links between the policy and school-level outcomes, teachers consistently thought it would lead to improved 'pupil learning and outcomes'. The headteacher was positive about the potential to raise pupil learning and standards and believed staff were too: *"they see it as a way forward to...working with children on assessment...work[ing] together as teams; we can see this as a way forward to improving standards."* (1300). The headteacher saw standards as being incredibly difficult to measure, however, particularly as *"at any one time there's half a dozen projects running to improve standards"* (1300).

6.2.2.2. Teachers' capacities for things

The outcome area being the second most popular for comment was individual and team capacities. Specifically, reflection and co-operation were named by four teachers; learning from one other, risk-taking, and openness were named by three teachers; and two teachers picked up on flexibility. The headteacher considered improvements in teachers' capacities to be highly likely *"because of how we've set this up"* (2300), making particular reference to teachers being on site and working with a colleague. This line of reasoning was echoed by another colleague.

6.2.2.3. Other outcomes

Under this category, teachers discussed the importance and likelihood of getting their weekends back although one said this was the most important outcome rather than the most likely. Teachers tended to see work/life balance as a side issue, particularly earlier on in the year, with one teacher questioning *"whether you'll just replace the time with doing something else"* (1303). In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of outcome
Round 1	School', then 'teachers', then 'other'.
Round 2	School', then 'teachers', then 'other'.

Table 6-4 Summary of perceptions of outcome over the year

6.3. Time

As for the two preceding studies, this section examines the emergent theme 'time'. As part of the empirical research, five teachers logged their PPA activities in the first term of study: one for two weeks, one for six weeks, and three for eight weeks. Breakdown of time spend is shown in Figure 6-2.

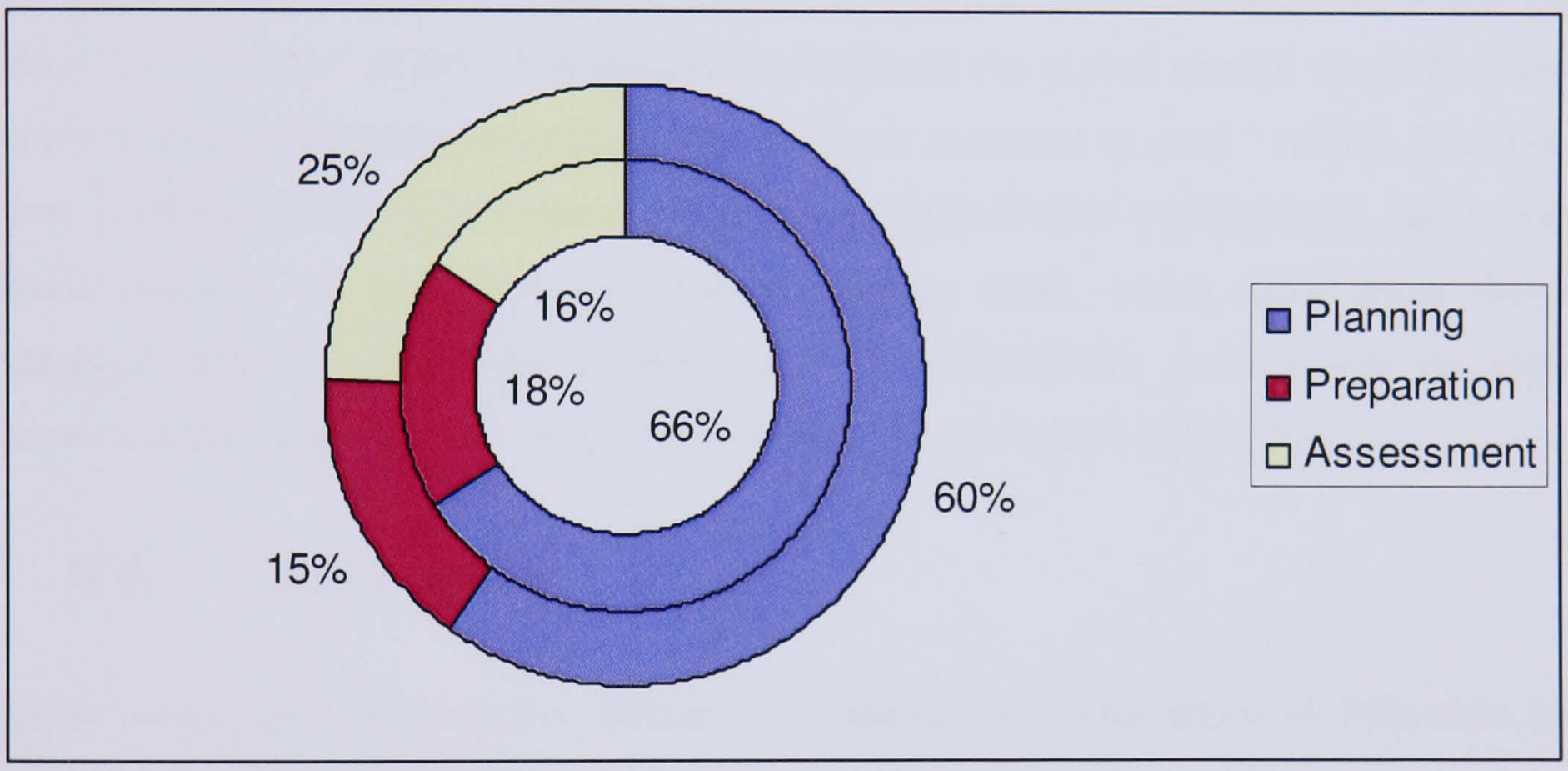

Figure 6-2 Comparison of term 1 diaries (inner circle) with term 3 diaries (outer circle)

6.3.1. *Influences on how time is spent*

Literacy and Numeracy planning was seen to be a particularly good use of time earlier on in the year particularly for teachers new to teaching, to a year group, or to a particular partnership. One teacher described it as being the most important activity, whereby *"If I had lots of things to address, planning would be the priority."* (2305), and another suggested it was key as it "*raises the standards*" (1303). Planning continued to be assigned the most PPA time, particularly because it was an activity amenable to collaborative working. PPA diaries confirmed the dominance of planning and preparation activities in term 1, although assessment time was recorded, which was greater than preparation time in fourteen instances, and greater than planning time in six out of a possible forty-four instances.

6.3.2. The effect of having extra time

One teacher addressed the paradox that PPA could both improve and reduce efficiency. Although planning *"obviously takes a lot longer if you're working with a colleague"* (1301), particularly when teachers were used to working very differently, albeit achieving the same positive outcomes, working in school *"really makes you concentrate and really focused on what you're doing."* (1301, 2301). A common theme was that PPA avoided the distractions of home working and ensured attention was focused *"because somebody's waiting for me"* (2300).

The issue of whether teachers carried out their work to a greater level of detail was a little less clear cut. Despite assertions of greater thoroughness; doing things *"more thoroughly as a result of PPA"* (2305), two teachers were keen to comment that they had always done the job properly: *"I would have done it anyway, but PPA just gives that space to sit and think about it a bit more"* (2305). The headteacher believed the overall change would be seen in terms of a straightforward exchange of work *"from weekends to week"* (1300). In terms of how this thoroughness and efficiency affected the length of their working week, this research found evidence of perceptions of reduced working week, which came about through enhanced efficiency for some teachers (e.g. 1302/2302/2304), and through the simple transfer of the more 'difficult' work from weekends to the school day (1302).

6.4. Influences

As for the two preceding studies, influences on provision of, and effects of, PPA time were examined under three categories: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher' influences.

6.4.1. External influences

Of Stoll's (1999) five external influences, 'community', and 'political action and tone' were said to be influential at Meadows. A further emergent finding was that the policy itself bore influence. External influences were not seen to play a significant part in the success, or otherwise, of PPA time at Meadows because supply cover was sourced internally and because finances were not seen as an obstacle to implementation of PPA. Aspects of the policy itself, such as the fact that it was within the school day, was regular, provided extra time, and made teachers feel *"appreciated and valued"* (2305) were positive influences. Two other factors which bore little significance but are worth a mention were political decisions, in terms of the role of government in continuing to enforce PPA time; and external specialists, in terms of the P.E. specialist the headteacher would have liked to employ but

could not due to it *"fall[ing] down at the last hurdle"*. (1300). This latter factor could marginally be seen as an inhibitor.

6.4.2. School influences

Of Stoll's (1999) nine school influences, only 'power' did not arise as pertinent at Meadows. There were no emergent findings at school-level.

Influence	Findings
History	From a financial point of view, staff had learned to manage the school with very limited finances during its growth period. This contributed to the majority view that *"finance will not be responsible for the improvement or worsening of this school"* (2300). The fact that the school had been assessed as successful meant that PPA was seen as another tool that *"just makes it easier."* (1303). These historical factors contributed to a positive perception of the advent of PPA, and therefore could be seen as 'qualifiers'. The historical factor 'size', on the other hand, was an 'inhibitor' where year group size due to *"the numbers issue in the school"* (2300) did not allow collaborative partnerships. It was a 'qualifier' where two teachers operated across a year group, as it facilitated the headteacher's choice in whether or not to promote teamworking.
Culture	The headteacher described the school as having *"a very positive context...It's a "can do" school."* (2300). This attitude had helped the headteacher to make the most of finances, and to make use of HLTAs, which she saw as a positive thing. In terms the influence of this *"can do"* culture upon the implementation and benefits of PPA time, it would be described as an 'enabler'.
Mix of pupils	The headteacher considered children at the school to be well behaved enough that they *"can be taught by HLTAs...their behaviour is exemplary"*(2300). The mix of pupils could be seen as a 'qualifier'.
Leadership	Leadership at this school was acknowledged as incredibly efficient, enabling all new initiatives to *"run like clockwork"* (1302). This made for mixed views on some of the potential effects of PPA time. While one teacher considered that *"to be honest [management issues] are not a lot to do with us...all those decisions are made."* (1301), leadership was on the whole seen as *"open and shared"* (1305), and so in no way preventing PPA from giving teachers opportunities to influence decisions at the school. Leadership in the sense of efficient organisation was therefore a 'qualifier'.

	The headteacher believed that acceptance of plans for PPA, as with many aspects of school life, were down to leadership tone: *"It's how I've presented it to them...the biggest stumbling block for progress in any school; and I guess in any institution; is the person that's leading it."* (1300). The headteacher had been responsible for investing in the training of TAs, which meant they could be used without worry *"because our TAs are so highly rated"* (1300), as well as for influencing teachers to work on site, with others, on certain activities. Leadership influencing activities was an 'enabler'.
Structures	Both existing structures, and those arising as part of PPA's implementation, were 'enablers' here. HLTAs were seen as being "*more suited to doing the job than perhaps a supply teacher*" (1304). Collaborative working was seen to be the source of many of the benefits of PPA time, including the *"exchange of ideas, which is essential in terms of delivering an exciting and varied curriculum...that our children are interested in learning"* (1300) and thus would be considered an 'enabler'. A noted structural problem, and 'inhibitor', was accommodation of teachers during PPA time *"until we get some building work completed."* (1300). On Wednesday afternoons teachers had to work off site, which *"stopped teamworking"* (2300) and mentoring of less experienced colleagues.
Teacher relationships	Relationships among teachers were such that they were happy to work together in teams, which was a 'qualifying' influence upon the implementation and benefits of PPA. Respect for the competence of TAs led to positive working relationships between teachers and TAs also.
Morale	High morale here led to a feeling of efficacy among staff *"that they know they do a good job."* (1300). Coupled with their belief that the policy had potential benefits, this morale led to an overall positivity about the policy, which could be described as a 'qualifier'.
Support staff	Support staff were a major strength because their competencies, developed over time by the school, ensured they were accepted by teachers and suitable to cover classes. Although clearly influenced by leadership, support staff were an 'enabling' factor.

Table 6-5 School influences at Meadows

6.4.3. Teacher influences

Of Stoll's eight teacher influences, knowledge, skills, confidence, and sense of interdependence were not seen as significant influences at Meadows. There was one emergent finding: 'use of PPA time'.

Influence	Findings
Beliefs	As discussed under 'Leadership', above, teachers were positive about having other people take their classes, which was a 'qualifier', ensuring that PPA went ahead as planned. One teacher discussed initial feelings of plans being *"almost undermining"* (1304) and that for TAs, the new experience had been *"a bit daunting"*, and yet this was spoken within a discussion expounding the virtues of TAs at this school.
Motivation to learn	The headteacher considered the way in which teachers here *"continue to learn all the time"* (1300) to be *"helping us with everything that we do"*, including the PPA implementation process. In terms of PPA she considered teachers to be *"ready and raring and waiting for it to go."* This characteristic of teachers could be described as an 'enabler'.
Life and career experiences (role)	All teachers interviewed had some form of leadership role at the school. Level of teaching experience affected what was carried out in PPA time to an extent. More experienced teachers would more likely *"be discussing the challenges that [our less experienced colleagues] face [than our own challenges]."* (2303). Experience was said, by one teacher, to improve use of PPA time as teachers *"learn to use PPA more effectively"* (2305). Being in a position to learn from the experiences of colleagues, and oneself, was an 'enabler' at this school. Because of the level of responsibility held already, and the corresponding allowance of leadership time they received, teachers did not generally consider PPA to facilitate further decision making. Good planning and assessment were also expected from teachers with or without PPA. Role was an 'inhibitor' in this sense.
Use of time	Teachers' use of PPA time was discussed as being beneficial in terms of its influence on the effects developing staff, and co-ordination, particularly through its provision of opportunity for peer coaching and collaboration. It also improved Literacy and Numeracy because time was spent on these activities either assessing, or reviewing planning. Use of PPA time was an 'enabler'.

Table 6-6 Teacher influences at Meadows

The following table gives an overall summary of influences on PPA's effects. As can be seen from that column in the table, Leadership was perceived to be a key influence, followed by the school's support staff.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES	Affected by	Q	E	I
Community				✓
Political action/tone				

	Political will / legislation		✓		
Inherent policy details					
	In the working day			✓	
	Extra time			✓	
	Regular			✓	
	Sense of valuing teachers			✓	
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
Culture					
	Positive			✓	
History					
	Size		✓		✓
	Finances		✓		
Mix of pupils					
	Positive attitudes / behaviour	Leadership		✓	
Leadership					
	Influence over activities			✓	
	Efficient organisation		✓		
Structures					
	Accommodation				✓
	PPA strategy (cover)	Leadership, Support staff		✓	
	PPA strategy (collaboration)	Leadership		✓	
	School org. (team planning)			✓	
Power issues					
Morale			✓		
Relationships			✓		
Support staff					
	Skills			✓	
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Beliefs					
	Skills of TAs	Leadership	✓		
Motivation				✓	
Experience (role)					
	Role limits perceived effects				✓
	Mentoring			✓	
	Learning from own/others' experience			✓	
Use of PPA time					
	Collaborating with others / TAs			✓	
	Coaching			✓	
	Specific subject planning			✓	
	Assessment			✓	
	Reviewing planning			✓	

Table 6-7 Summary of influences on PPA's implementation at Meadows

In summary, external influences were either qualifiers or enablers; those at school level were also predominantly qualifiers and enablers. Teacher-level influences were predominantly enablers.

6.5. Effects

6.5.1. General trends

As in the two preceding studies, a visual representation of perceived effects is shown in the following two charts (Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4). Similarity in shape of the two charts demonstrates that in general, if PPA was perceived to give rise to a certain effect, teachers in this school had no reason to suggest this would not continue. Further, in most cases, any change reflects more positive answers for the future because teachers generally considered practice would enhance their use of PPA time. From left to right along the charts: PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, co-ordination, learning community, programme coherence, resources, processes, and human resources, and a marginally positive effect on external support, collaborative planning in a school-wide sense, and reflection. It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, or leadership.

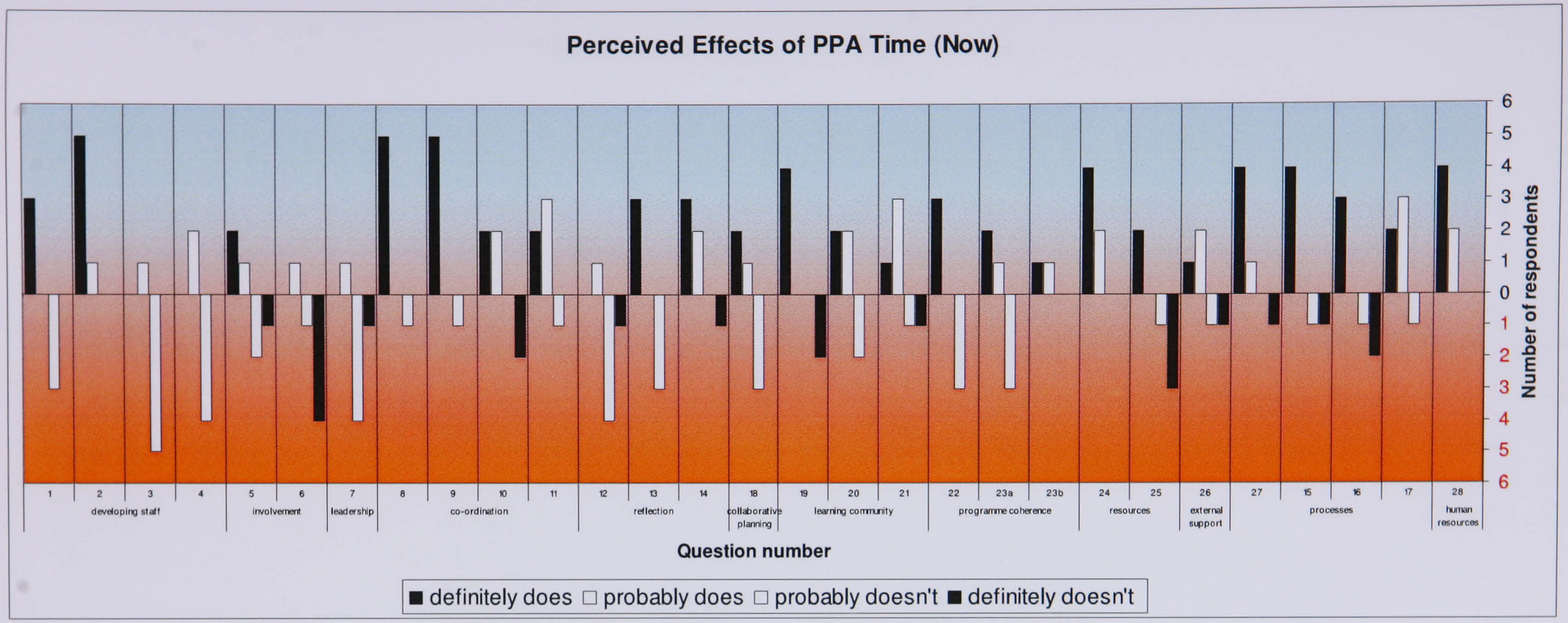

Figure 6-3 The effects PPA is perceived to have now.

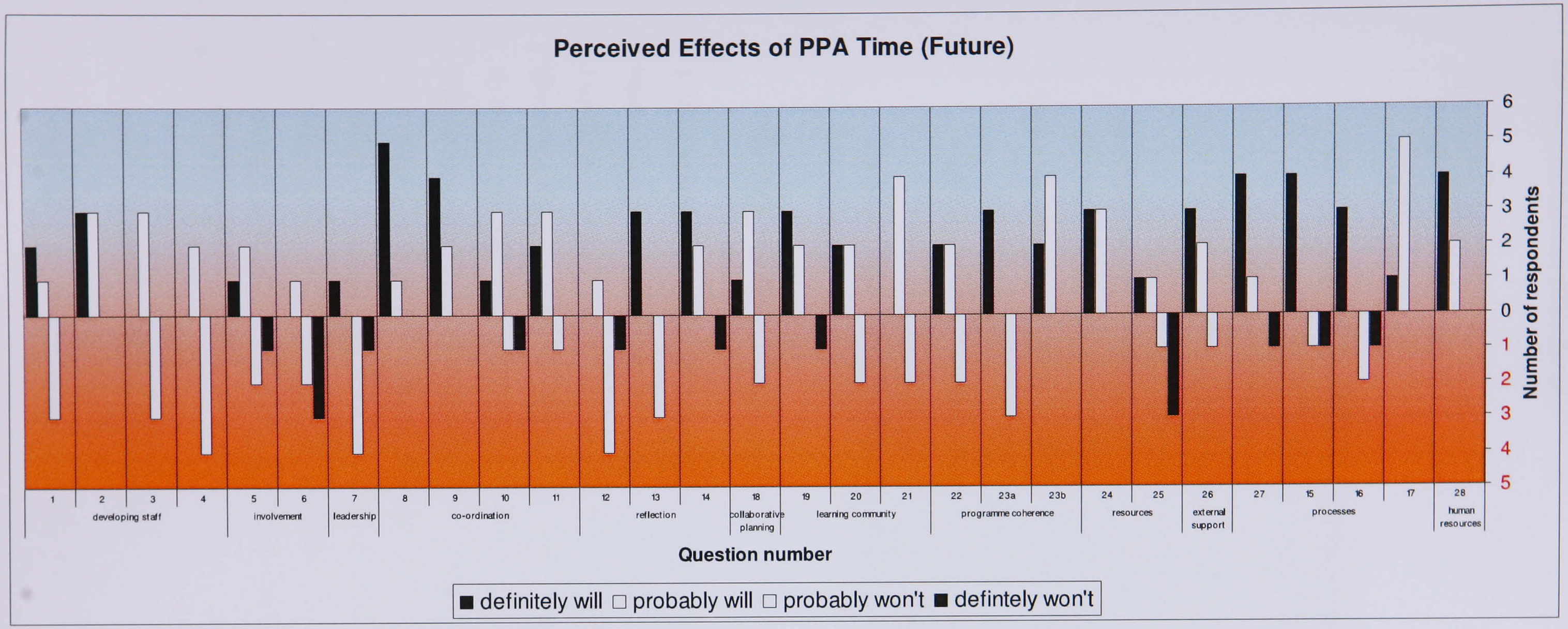

Figure 6-4 The effects PPA may have in the future

The chart below (Figure 6-5) indicates which of these effects were perceived to be important for improvement at this school:

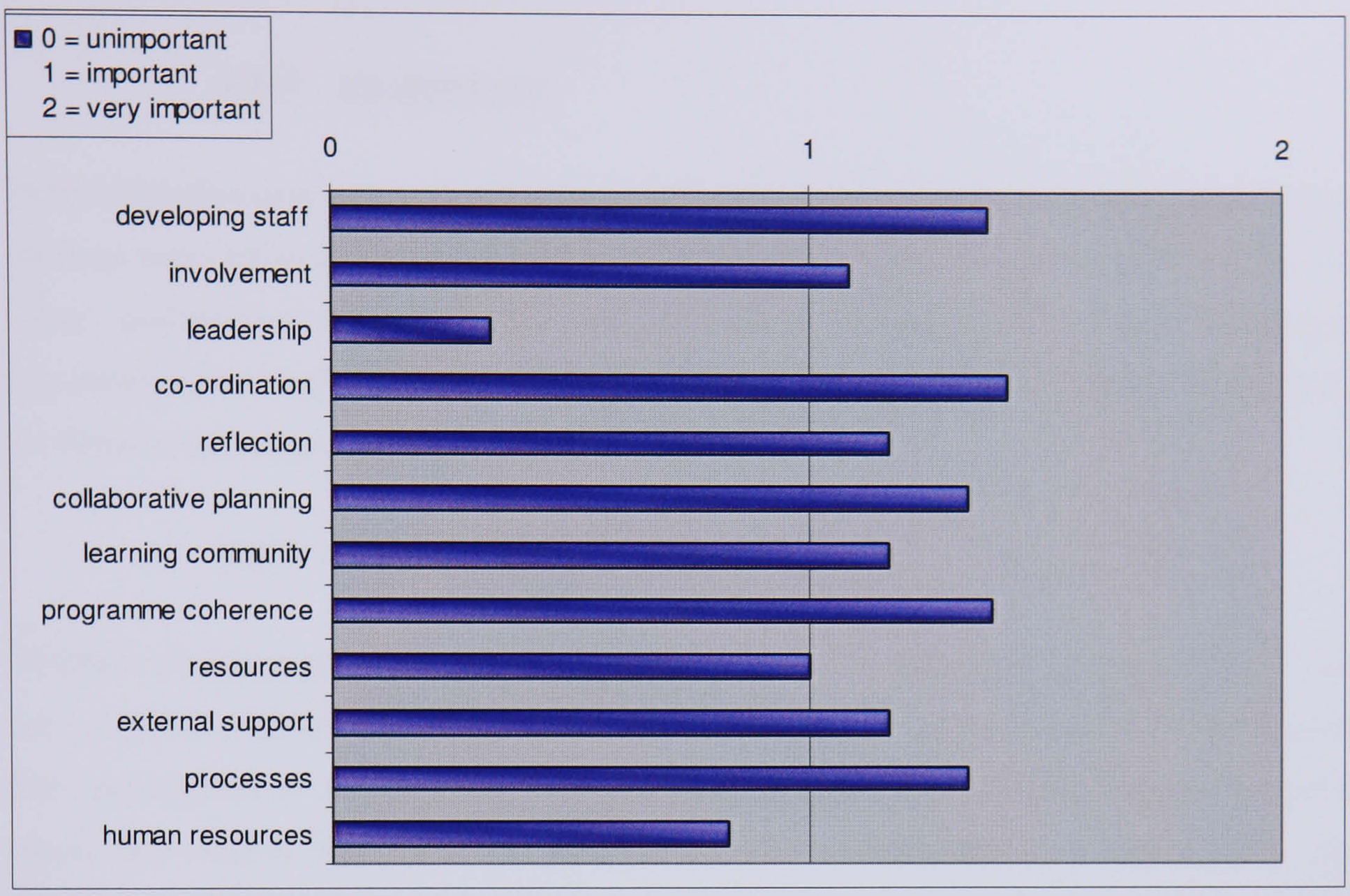

Figure 6-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement at Meadows

In line with the findings of the school conditions survey, which showed all areas to be highly rated (Figure 6-1), Figure 6-5 shows that on average, none of the factors shown were considered critical ("very important") for improvement to occur. In line with earlier discussions on the highly efficient leadership, those interviewed did not consider leadership to be an area where improvement was necessary if school-wide improvement was to occur. Comparison of Figure 6-5 with Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4 shows a good visual correlation, indicating that PPA was seen to yield nine out of ten of the effects considered important, (although it improved three only marginally: external support, collaborative planning, and reflection), with 'involvement' being the one important area it did not affect. The following 12 sections explain how PPA was perceived to bring about the effects shown in Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4.

6.5.2. Developing staff

Although skill development was attributed by some teachers to other activities, such as 'professional development' or 'leadership and management', those who were positive about PPA's ability to develop skills related it to time spent collaborating with, or peer coaching, other teachers *"because it gives me ideas that I wouldn't necessarily have thought of*

myself." (2302). Use of PPA, and existing skills, meant teachers generally did not consider it to improve their assessment skills. Existing high expectations of pupils meant teachers did not consider PPA to increase these.

6.5.3. Involvement

Parental involvement was said to be *"very well developed"* (2305) at Meadows, and so most teachers were negative about the likelihood of this being enhanced through PPA. PPA was spent predominantly on Literacy and Numeracy planning rather than developing opportunities for feedback, so the fact that children had a part to play in leading the planning for Foundation subjects already, was unaffected by PPA.

6.5.4. Leadership

Teachers all had responsibility for a particular area and considered it was their job *"to just get on with it and not hand it over."* (2305). They also had Leadership time, which limited their perceptions of the effect of PPA on facilitating decision making. Leadership styles meant they already had input: *"responsibility is shared out quite a lot here anyway, and people are encouraged to make decisions and to input into things"* (1305). For the headteacher, PPA had perhaps given teachers more of a shared responsibility within their partnerships.

6.5.5. Co-ordination

Where teachers received their PPA time with another colleague, they believed that PPA would enhance co-ordination and co-operation because previously planning had been done *"on a Sunday afternoon in isolation."* (2300). Communication was *"often it's as you walk up the corridor."* (1302), so extra time was seen as useful. Working alongside a colleague also challenged and broadened their views: *"people will get out of their boxes...and stop [thinking] "this is the way it's always done so this is the way we're going to do it." "* (2301).

6.5.6. Reflection

The time element of PPA was seen to allow further discussion and assessment. Its ability to help develop a school-wide improvement agenda was limited, however, because *"that's done through other mechanisms"* (2300) and whole-staff initiatives. PPA time helped to make use of the strengths of individuals, particularly the HLTAs covering classes, and teachers in particular team pairings, but these strengths were recognised beforehand and

were what ensured PPA worked, rather than what PPA achieved. They were also limited to year group partnerships.

6.5.7. Collaborative planning

Views on whether PPA helped in development of school-wide learning aims were mixed. Although certain elements of learning could be filtered down into year group level planning because of extra time (for instance, one teacher mentioned a school-wide emphasis on active learning and teaching), on the negative side, teachers were working *"within our individual teams"* (2304), which limited the impact. Proposing that school-wide aims were developed by PPA, the headteacher emphasised the collective nature of PPA planning.

6.5.8. Learning community

School-wide learning aims could be discussed and worked on a little more than previously because of the provision of extra time for staff to collaborate in their year group partnerships, where *"You're not so pressured."* (2303). PPA time was also credited with making a reflective group of people even more reflective, particularly through the experience of questioning each other when collaborating, which allowed teachers to *"try things, and work though things, that you can then take forward."* (2303).

6.5.9. Programme coherence

Dedicated, regular, PPA time had strengthened the mentoring process, giving opportunity for beneficial partnerships. The headteacher described her thought process thus: *"I'm teaming you up with them, and they're going to influence what you do..." "* (2300). PPA served to remind staff to bring elements of the learning process such as higher order learning, and active learning (2302), as discussed as a wider staff in meetings, into their planning and thus, to sustain plans for improvement. In terms of the sustainability of PPA itself, staff members were unanimously positive although one comment suggested *"there'd be a riot"* (2303) if government ever revoked the policy, and another teacher noted the significance of government decisions on this matter (2305).

6.5.10. Resources

Extra time to look for, source, and order resources meant PPA was considered by most teachers to facilitate improvement of practical resources. The opposite was said of financial resources because of the costs incurred in employing support staff at HLTA level, and the way that *"they might have to take money from somewhere else to fund PPA."* (2302).

6.5.11. External support

PPA was seen to enhance external support marginally at the school in terms of the extra time it provided for teachers *"to contact people to support the curriculum."* (2304).

6.5.12. Processes

Views on PPA's role in improving processes, particularly planning and assessment, were predominantly positive, with one teacher suggesting assessment would improve because time during the school day made it *"a little bit more in-depth and much more personalised"* (2305). On the whole, extra time to collaborate and reflect was seen to facilitate more careful target setting, reviewing of plans and assessing, although the notion that teachers would have done this anyway arose twice.

6.5.13. Human resources

PPA was unanimously considered a motivator because it was in the school day, which encouraged teachers to use time productively and so avoid working in their own time. Time with other staff members motivated staff by inputting new ideas and causing them to focus on the task in hand. One teacher mentioned the feeling of being *"appreciated and valued."* (2305) because of the implicit recognition of the work teachers do.

6.6. Capacity

6.6.1. Does PPA build capacity?

The perception that PPA built capacity for improvement at this school was unanimous, although a variety of reasons were given, with several teachers citing a combination of factors. Firstly, teachers *felt* more effective and constructive because of the extra time in school that motivated them to get work done. They also felt a tangible sense of being valued. It is likely that these feelings further motivated them to respond positively. Secondly, PPA was seen as a tool to enhance collaboration, teamwork, and coaching. Motivation also played a part here, as collaborative working enhanced teachers' efforts to work efficiently with one another. The practice also led to better discussion and reflection, and thus *"it's improving teaching and learning."* (2303). Thirdly, its provision of time focused teachers upon their planning, resources, and assessment, helping to ensure teachers brought in key aspects such as active learning and differentiation.

6.6.2. What is capacity building?

Teachers considered the notion of capacity building to reflect either one, or two, of two things. Four interviewees, including the headteacher, related it to a 'gap' in provision where *"standards aren't high enough and perhaps people aren't working together as much as they might need to be...It may [be] leadership issues"* (2300). One teacher suggested that this gap may reflect under-achievement and not just under-attainment, so that in a school with capacity, *"the children have the opportunity to develop [in] the very best [way] they can."* (2301). Under this sort of definition, PPA was said to contribute to capacity building because of its effect in enhancing *"the team approach to things"* (2300).

For three teachers, a school with capacity to improve was one that had certain resources, attitudes, or qualities, such as *"that will and ethos of wanting to do things better"* (2303), or *"[strength in] maximising every opportunity"* (2305), or *"teaching skills...[and strength in] managing the money side of things."* (2304). The ability to teach well was said to be hampered by shortcomings in physical resources in one year group in particular. In this situation, all PPA could do was to provide time that enhanced this awareness.

Sustaining improvement was mentioned by two teachers: *"[a school with capacity for improvement is] always looking to improve."* (2303); and *"it keeps stretching itself, getting better and better, and making sure it is maximising every opportunity."* (2305). This notion of maximising the effective use of resources was mentioned by another teacher as well who suggested that *"we've got the space but not really the resources to be able to use it."* (2304).

6.7. Summary

6.7.1. Strategy

Meadows adopted a single strategy led entirely by HLTAs, who were given additional paid time to plan. Teachers were released in pairs and asked to stay on site. PPA time revolved on a four-week cycle so that teachers maintained control of all subjects.

6.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

Themes emerging about the perceived *purpose* of the policy were work/life balance, and standards, including the notion of work/life balance leading to improvements in standards, although towards the end of the year the idea of standards came to dominate people's perceptions of the purpose of PPA.

At both ends of the year, school outcomes, namely 'improved pupil learning and outcomes', were considered most likely to result from PPA. Perceptions of *purpose* and *outcomes* therefore fitted closely together. 'Teacher' outcomes were considered likely to arise particularly because of the collaborative working arrangements, but also just because of opportunities for reflection. 'Other' outcomes, namely work life/balance were also considered likely, with no significant changes in opinion over the year.

6.7.3. Time

Three reasons explained why Literacy and Numeracy planning tended to dominate PPA time: its demand for time, its importance, and its amenability to team working.

Three main effects on time were noticed: enhanced efficiency, enhanced thoroughness, and a reduced working week.

6.7.4. Influences

Key findings (from Table 6-7) were that:

- External influences were of little significance in this school.
- Leadership had a strong influence, particularly in that it affected other influences on the implementation and effects of PPA time.
- Of four inhibitors (size, accommodation, external community, and teachers' role), only one was within the bounds of control of the school. The inhibitive effect upon perceptions of leadership roles could potentially be changed.

6.7.5. Effects

The summary table below shows the effects PPA was seen to have, or not to have, at this school according to interview evidence; and the sorts of influences impacting upon whether or not they were associated with PPA. Ticks represent an influence that had a positive impact upon a particular effect. Crosses represent an influence that had a negative bearing on an effect. Key findings were that:

- PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, co-ordination, reflection, learning community, programme coherence, processes, and human resources, and a marginally positive effect on resources, external support, and collaborative planning in a school-wide sense.
- It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, or leadership.

- Of those effects associated with PPA, a very clear pattern of influences emerges. Key influences were policy details, structures, and teachers' use of PPA time.

					Effects of PPA											
					Associated with PPA										Not associated with PPA	
			Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor	Developing staff	Co-ordination	Reflection	Learning community	Programme coherence	Processes	Human resources	Resources	External support	Collaborative planning	Involvement	Leadership
External		Political decisions	✓							×							
		Community	✓														
		Inherent policy details		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	× ✓	✓	✓		
School		Culture		✓													
		History	✓		✓												
		Mix of pupils		✓		×										×	
		Leadership	✓	✓													×
		Structures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓ ×		✓
		Relationships	✓														
		Morale	✓														
		Support staff		✓													
Teacher		Experiences		✓	✓												×
		Beliefs	✓														
		Motivation		✓													
		Use of PPA time		✓		✓ ×	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	×	

Table 6-8 Summary of links between 'influences' and 'effects'

6.7.6. Capacity

PPA was considered to build capacity for a number of reasons including its effect on teachers' motivation and effectiveness, and its provision of time for reflection and the opportunity to work together. Ideas on what 'capacity for improvement' might mean included both having the need to improve, and having the resources to improve, namely the will, ethos, teaching skills, money management skills, and ability to maximise opportunities.

7. Analysis School 4 – The Orchard Primary School

7.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from The Orchard Primary School. This case follows the same layout as previous cases, with a summary of key findings to conclude the chapter.

7.1.1. School pupil context

	Total number of pupils on roll	Pupils eligible for KS2 tests	Total number and percentage of pupils with SEN				Aggregated Key Stage 2 Percentage
			with statements		without statements		
			Number	%	Number	%	
LA Average				5.30		16.10	242
England Average				3.30		15.90	240
The Orchard	456	62	6	1.30	44	9.60	265

	% half days missed due to	
	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
LA Average		0.20
England Average	5.00	0.40
The Orchard	4.90	0.10

Table 7-1 Attainment table, The Orchard Primary. Source: (DfES, 2005a)

As an early adopter of the Workforce Reform initiative, The Orchard implemented the full PPA requirement in 2005/06. It was last inspected by OfSTED in February 2004, two months prior to the school being selected for this research. Information was taken from this report, and from OfSTED's 2005 attainment tables. Throughout the period of research The Orchard continued to serve a wide area with moderately advantaged circumstances, as detailed in the OfSTED report (2004c). The proportion of pupils on the SEN register was below average. At the time of publication of the OfSTED report, the school was considered to be very good, striving for excellence, and providing very good value for money. Teaching was frequently very good, which impacted positively on pupil learning. Attainment on entry was average, and by Key Stage 6, attainment was above average, which continued throughout the research period, demonstrating good achievement. Having been below average, attendance improved over the course of the research to the levels shown in Table 7-1 above.

7.1.2. School conditions

The School Conditions Survey (section 3.5.3.4) yielded a 31% rate of return (n=27), from a respondent population as shown in Table 3-9. Figure 7-1 demonstrates a picture within this school that aggregate scores for all conditions fell between 'often' and 'nearly always'. This does not reflect the variance; for example, scores for involvement fell between 'rarely' and 'nearly always'. It can be seen that no single stakeholder group consistenty rated school conditions more highly than another, although this should be considered against the low response rate, particularly from support staff.

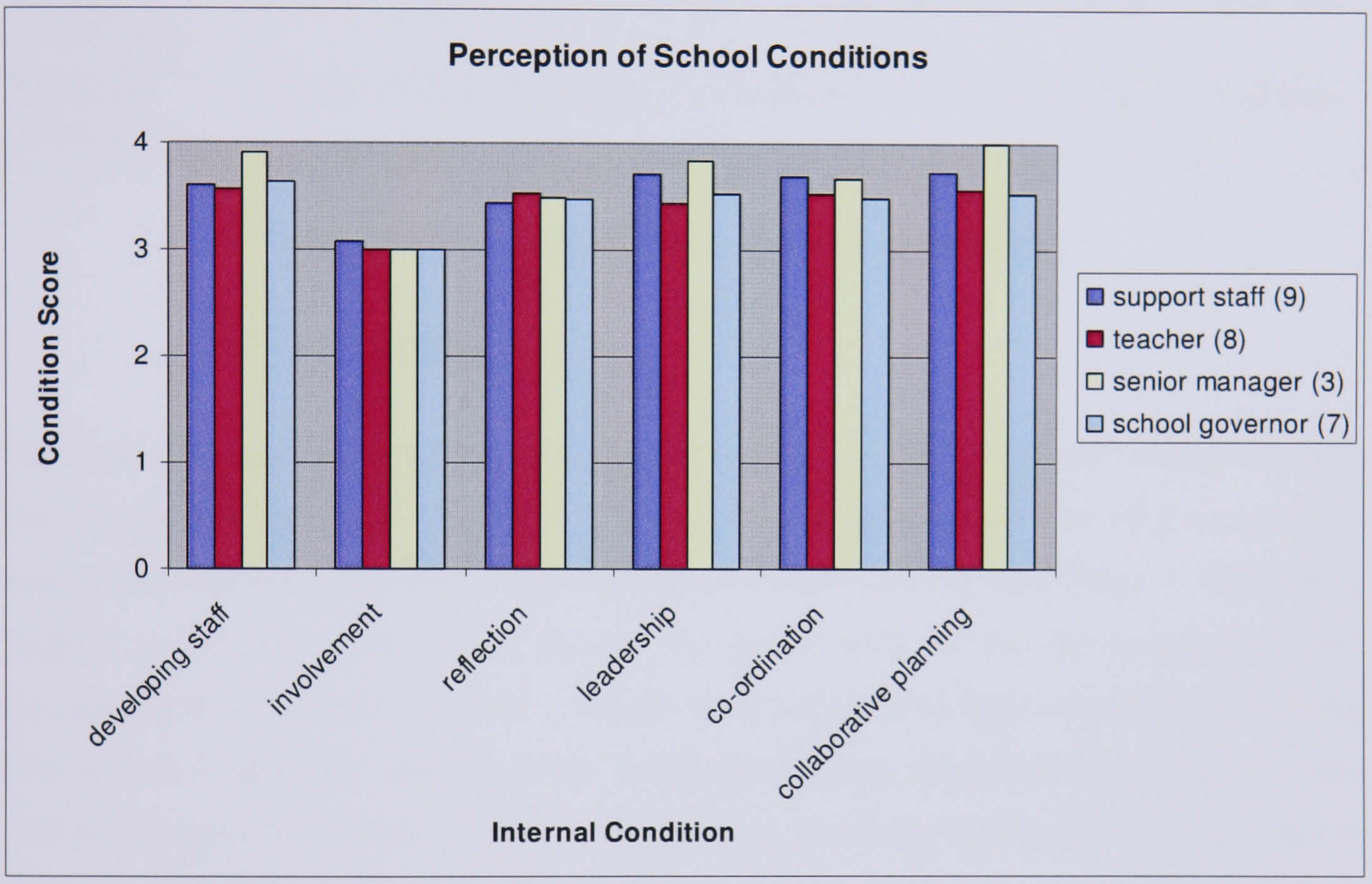

Figure 7-1 Chart showing stakeholder perceptions of The Orchard's internal conditions

7.1.3. Interviewees

With the exception of the headteacher, who was interviewed twice but not observed, the following staff (from a potential pool of 21 teachers) were interviewed twice and observed:

Name	Role	Gender	Contract
James (1400/2400)	Headteacher	Male	Full time
Kerry (1401/2401)	Year R Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Maureen (1402/2402)	Year R Teacher	Female	Full time

Ben (1403/2403)	Senior Management Team / Deputy Head / Year 5 Teacher	Male	Full time
Gerri (1404/2404)	Year 1 Teacher	Female	Full time
Carole (1405/2405)	Floating class teacher / Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO)	Female	Full time
David (1406/2406)	Year 4 Teacher (NQT)	Male	Full time
Sally (1407/2407)	Year 3 Teacher / Subject Co-Ordinator	Female	Full time
Karen (1408/2408)	SMT / Key Stage Co-Ordinator / Subject Co-Ordinator / Year 4 Teacher	Female	Full time
Rachel (1409/2409)	Year 2 Teacher (NQT) / Subject Co-Ordinator	Female	Full time
Elizabeth (1410/2410)	Year 6 Teacher / Subject Co-Ordinator	Female	Full time

Table 7-2 Interview participants at The Orchard Primary.

7.1.4. PPA strategy

The Orchard adopted a mixed strategy. First, the school's SENCO provided release for Early Years' staff. Second, one of the school's TAs was appointed as a part time HLTA to provide twelve hours of specialist Music teaching across Foundation and Key Stage 1. Third, Key Stage 2 cover requirements were met by the appointment of two 0.5 contract teachers specializing in R.E. and P.E, whose contracts were extended so they were paid for an extra 10% of time to allow for their own PPA entitlements. A key feature of the strategy was that staff providing cover should be able to offer discrete elements of the curriculum in order to minimise continuity and liaison issues.

7.2. Perceived Purpose and Outcomes

7.2.1. Perceived purpose of PPA time

7.2.1.1. Standards

When first interviewed the headteacher talked of a twofold approach to raising standards, centered around the provision of time within the working day. Firstly, it allowed teachers to plan quality learning activities when they were *"not shattered from a day's work"* (1400) Secondly, it allowed teachers to communicate more effectively with their classroom support staff so that those staff could be more effective. In passing he mentioned working together with other teachers, but did not emphasise collaborative planning. At the end of the year, he

mentioned standards only in passing and not explicitly, in the sense of *"time...to do effective planning, preparation and assessment"* (2400). Of ten teachers, only two considered standards to be the purpose. These two were aware of the government's drive for *"value added"* (1406) in such a policy, and for standards, which *"is always going to be the leader of why any initiative like this would come in."* (1403).

7.2.1.2. Work/life balance

The headteacher was critical of the policy as part of the wider Workforce Remodelling for its lack of clarity over desired outcomes. He considered it to be driven *"by the wrong things...[by] recruitment and retention of teachers"* (1400). At the end of the year he saw its purpose as a *"goodwill gesture"* aimed at stripping *"some of the rubbish that teachers are expected to do"* and creating *"specialist roles at the appropriate level"*. No teacher consistently saw the policy as being solely about work/life balance. It tended to be mentioned alongside improved working.

7.2.1.3. Improved working

By the end of the year, focus had changed slightly from a dominance of work/life balance as the main purpose of PPA time, to discussion of improved working. In only a couple of cases was improved working linked to standards, however, and even in those cases the link was not explicit. Comments were more reflective of the 'means' rather than the 'ends' of what the time was for, for example: *"a well planned curriculum"* (2402); *"to work with your key stage partner effectively"* (2408). In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of purpose
Round 1	Primarily work / life balance, then improved working and standards
Round 2	Primarily improved working, then work / life balance, then standards

Table 7-3 Summary of perceptions of purpose over the year

7.2.2. Perceived outcomes of PPA time

7.2.2.1. School's capacity to do something

At both ends of the year, the school's capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes was considered the most likely school level outcome. As to whether PPA would help develop the school's capacity to sustain improvement, all teachers considered this possible, at the very least.

7.2.2.2. Teachers' capacities for things

When first interviewed, there were a number of comments about how teachers' skills in the areas of learning, reflection, and co-operation were enhanced by PPA's elements of team working (1401/7/8), and extra time (1403/4/5). The headteacher included in this the notion of development of TAs and its *"profound implication for the future"* (1400) as their roles changed.

7.2.2.3. Other outcomes

Reduced stress and workload, in short, better work/life balance, was cited as being a likely outcome by the majority of teachers. The fact that nobody considered these outcomes 'unlikely' was because in order to comment on them, teachers first had to consider them likely. In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of outcome
Round 1	Primarily 'other', then 'school', then 'teacher'.
Round 2	Primarily 'school', then 'teacher' and 'other'.

Table 7-4 Summary of perceptions of outcome over the year

7.3. Time

As for the three preceding cases, this section examines the emergent theme 'time'. Interviews and diaries provide the source of information here, and Table 3-10 shows the number of diaries kept. Breakdown of time spend is shown in Figure 7-2.

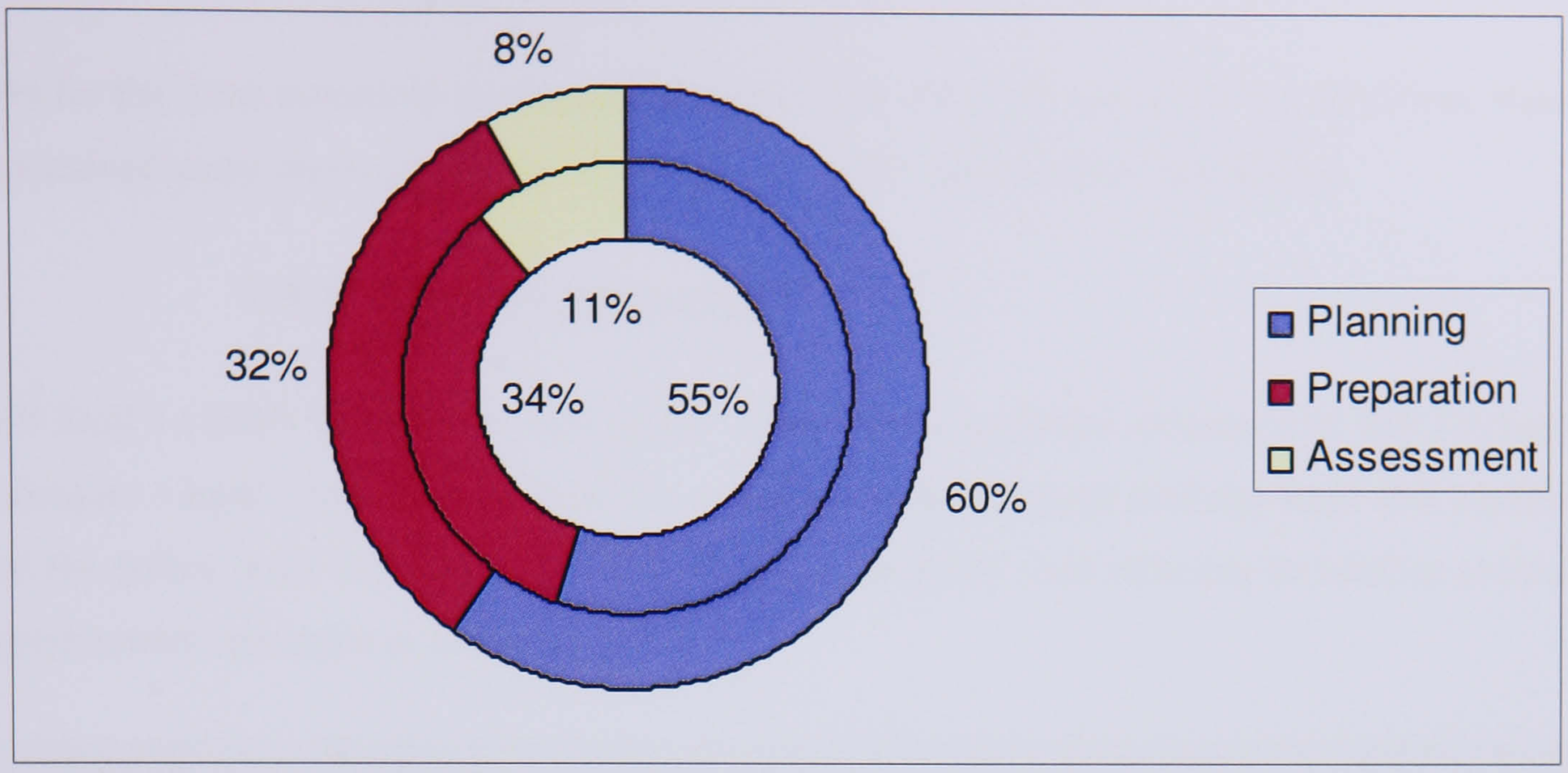

Figure 7-2 Comparison of term 1 diaries (inner circle) with term 3 diaries (outer circle)

7.3.1. Influences on how time is spent

In the autumn term all teachers were using PPA to plan for the following week's lessons, and most were also using it for preparation. This was confirmed by the diaries. Two mentioned assigning preparation to support staff (1402/9). Planning dominated PPA because it was most appropriate for the collaborative working arrangements where *"it's a waste of time to try and do assessment of individual children then."* (2409), and it was *"the most immediate need"* (2403). Although not acknowledged by teachers, perhaps most significantly the headteacher had placed an expectation on them, prior to PPA's statutory implementation so that they *"had a year of working in that model"* (2400), that planning and preparation were to be prioritised as activities that would enhance pupil learning. Towards the end of the academic year six teachers were spending more time on assessment into their PPA time. Use of PPA time for assessment depended upon the extent to which teachers saw it as an activity benefitting from joint input.

7.3.2. The effect of having extra time

The majority of interviewees commented that PPA gave them back time for themselves by enhancing their efficiency and reducing their working week. Efficiency of teachers was seen to be enhanced because of PPA's positioning within the school day, which meant resources were all to hand (1407/2404), *"teachers will be working at a time of day when they're going to be more productive"* (1406 and 1405/1407), and TAs could take on preparation, and be present so they did not *"have to be briefed every day."* (1409).

7.4. Influences

As for the three preceding studies, influences on provision of, and effects of, PPA time were examined under three categories: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher' influences.

7.4.1. External influences

Of Stoll's (1999) five external influences, three were considered influential at The Orchard (broader / local community, and political action). Two emergent findings were that aspects of the policy itself bore influence; also, 'external pressure' (not referring to local or central government) emerged as a finding.

Influence	Findings
Broader community, local community	Although the headteacher's aim was for the school to develop *"its own bank of people that they can rely on."* (1400), not all of the PPA cover was sourced internally. Noting that *" 'The Community' has some element to offer"* (1400), the headteacher advertised externally for an R.E. teacher. This would be considered a 'qualifier'.
Political action and tone	The headteacher saw the Extended Schools agenda as an 'enabling' influence that would help ensure co-ordinated service provision across the community, and directly help bring in the provision for PPA cover, using as examples the church, who delivered some of the R.E. curriculum, and the school nurse (1400).
External pressure	The headteacher saw external pressure, particularly in the form of unions *"ensuring that the provision is made"* as something that *"will always have some part to play in driving PPA in the future"* (1400). In the sense that this pressure needs to be in place for PPA to happen, this influence would be a 'qualifier'.
Inherent policy details	The statutory nature of the policy could be described as a 'qualifier' that would help ensure longevity of the policy *"unless it's [replaced] by something better"* (1400). Its recognition of teachers' workload was motivating, and an 'enabler'. Extra time was an 'enabler' because it facilitated a range of PPA's effects; namely, developing staff, co-ordination, reflection, collaborative planning, resources, processes, and human resources. The headteacher suggested problems arose from the short timescales between training of Local Authority trainers and dates when *"they were then expected to roll that out to other heads"*. (1400), which would be described loosely as an 'inhibitor'. Lack of funding attached to the policy could be uncontroversially

	described as an 'inhibitor'. Having gone through a school-wide TA development process, the headteacher said he was in a position to use TAs to provide cover, but that *"with a limitless budget I wouldn't even consider that"* (2400) because employment of excellent teachers *"would have more of an impact on raising standards"* (2400). Teachers argued that heads had used TAs as *"teaching on the cheap"* (1407, 1405, 2409,), which came at the expense of supply cover for other classes (2409).

Table 7-5 External influences at The Orchard

7.4.2. School influences

Of Stoll's (1999) nine school influences, power issues, relationships between teachers, and morale did not arise as pertinent at The Orchard. There were no emergent findings at school-level. The following series of analytical statements explore each of the influences.

Influence	Findings
Mix of pupils	Some effects of PPA were slightly influenced by pupils in a small way, and so this influence would be considered a 'qualifier'. Firstly, particular ages of children were said to influence whether or not PPA enhanced communication (1404). Secondly, particular cohorts of children were said to influence how involved their parents were (1409) or how academically minded they were and thus, how much PPA was considered to sustain improvement year-on-year (2409).
Culture	Ensuring success of PPA strategy was firstly about challenging *"inbuilt culture"* (1400) to ensure its acceptance. In this school, culture could be described as a 'qualifier' due to the effect of leadership, which had ensured the support of teachers *"because they see the benefits in terms of what they can reap as a result of this."* (1400). The school also had *"a very open culture of being encouraged to make decisions and to lead initiatives"* (1403).
History	Although the school was *"larger...than most"* (1400) and the head described it as having more surplus cash, PPA was seen to have strong financial implications, particularly because of the school's tight budget in that year. Finances were an 'inhibitor'.
Leadership	The headteacher was aware of the importance of his role in having and communicating a vision for PPA, and its role in the wider scheme of Workforce Remodelling. His communication had ensured *"teachers up front have been very supportive of the idea"* (1400). In his view,

	leadership affected morale, the relationships between teachers, and use of PPA time. It was, therefore, an 'enabler'.
Structures	The expertise of specialist cover staff was frequently cited as a strength. Provided it could be *"maintained next year"* (2408), this would be considered an 'enabler'. Although the positives outweighed the negatives, there were 'inhibitive' aspects to the cover, however. Some TA support *"which we've fought for for years"* (1407) was lost. A couple of comments reflected that *"however good your TA is, they don't quite do what you'd intended them to do"* (2409). Collaborative working meant teachers took little advantage of the opportunities afforded by time in school to assess children one-to-one. Considering the emphasis placed on the role of assessment through the Assessment for Learning policy, which is *"a big agenda"* here (1403), and the way in which *"effective planning is about effective assessment."* (2400) it could be argued that collaborative working arrangements were in some (albeit small) way 'inhibitive' and that opportunities were missed. In other ways, collaborative planning was described by the headteacher as *"one of the keys to effective use of PPA time."* (1400), and in this sense, an 'enabler'. Many comments reflected the benefits of working with a colleague and with TAs (1402/3/5/9). Lack of space was an 'inhibitor' as it meant teachers spent time *"running about trying to find things"* (1410).
Support staff	The school *"were lucky"* (1400) to have two *"suitably skilled"* people available to provide cover for Music and P.E. The headteacher saw development of existing support staff as *"key"*. A number of teachers pointed to the strengths of their own TAs who *"can be your eyes and ears when you're not there"* (1401); could help speed up preparation (1403/8); and were committed to, and knowledgeable about, their classes (1405). Support staff in this school were considered 'enablers'.

Table 7-6 School influences at The Orchard

7.4.2.1. Mix of pupils

7.4.3. Teacher influences

Of Stoll's eight teacher influences, three were seen as influential here (experiences, beliefs, and skills), and there was one emergent finding: 'use of PPA time'.

Influence	Findings
Beliefs	On the whole, teachers in this school saw the benefits of PPA time as well as the benefits of developing the role of TAs within the school. Leadership in the school had challenged their assumptions about the role of teachers based on *"inbuilt culture"* (1400) that may have existed. As a result teachers were supportive of plans. Countering the feeling of having their training and experience undermined was the knowledge that TAs in this school were able, and on reflection, were often more able than supply teachers. This influence was a 'qualifier', itself influenced by leadership.
Skills	The head and one other teacher both suggested the school's capacity for flexibility, through teachers' skills, abilities to take on new challenges (1400), and *"because the teachers in this school are very able, open minded, and flexible"* (2409) was key to maximising the benefit of PPA time and maintaining it in the long term. This would be an enabler. Skill was also a qualifier to ensuring teacher benefits of PPA were maximised. For example, one teacher believed PPA's ability to improve her work/life balance was in part down to her lack of organisational skills, saying that *"If I was more organised perhaps I would have more time at home."* (2407). Were it a school-wide trend it would become an 'inhibitor'.
Life and career experiences (role)	One teacher (1404) believed that being fairly new to teaching she would learn to work quicker with time. Due to stage in her career, another was *"not particularly interested in wanting to change things."* (2402), which meant she did not see PPA as giving her more influence. Both these experiences highlight teacher experiences as a 'qualifier' to ensuring benefits of PPA were maximised. Were this a school-wide trend this would be an 'inhibitor'. For another teacher, role was an 'enabler' because she saw positive outcomes of PPA in relation to her leadership role: *"For me personally [PPA is very likely to help us sustain improvement]. For example...writing...is one of my big roles in school."* (2403).
Use of time	Positive effects were felt in terms of developing staff (through use of time for reflection, risk taking, and feedback), reflection (through assessment), collaborative planning (through meeting staff meeting targets), programme coherence (through specific subject planning), resources (through resource planning), external support (through contacting outsiders), and processes (through risk-taking). Positive

	effects were also said to relate to the collaborative working practices adopted such as using TAs to take on preparation. Not using time for assessment, due to working collaboratively, made both these aspects of time use 'inhibitors'.

Table 7-7 Teacher influences at The Orchard

The following table gives an overall summary of influences on PPA's effects.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES		Affected by	Q	E	I
Community			✓		
Political action/tone					
	Extended Schools Agenda			✓	
Inherent policy details					
	Extra time			✓	
	Delivery of training				(✓)
	Funding				✓
	Statutory		✓		
	Sense of valuing teachers			✓	
External pressure					
	Unions		✓		
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
Culture					
	Openness		✓		
Mix of pupils					
	Cohort		✓		
Leadership					
	Vision			✓	
	Communication of vision			✓	
History					
	Finances				✓
Structures					
	Accommodation				✓
	PPA strategy (cover)			✓	(✓)
	PPA strategy (collaboration)	Size		✓	(✓)
	PPA strategy (with TAs)			✓	
	Development of TAs	Funding		✓	
Support staff					
	Skills			✓	
	Sustainable			✓	
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Beliefs					
	Skills of TAs	Leadership	✓		
	Developing TAs	Leadership	✓		
Skills					
	Flexibility			✓	
	Organisation		✓		
Experience (role)					
	Helps leadership role			✓	
	Learning from experience		✓		
Use of PPA time					

	Collaborating with others / TAs	Leadership, Structures (collaborative PPA strategy)		✓	(✓)
	Feedback			✓	
	Risk taking			✓	
	Meeting staff meeting targets			✓	
	Resource planning			✓	
	Contacting outsiders			✓	
	Specific subject planning			✓	
	Assessment			✓	(✓)
	Reflection			✓	

Table 7-8 Summary of influences on PPA's implementation at The Orchard

In summary, there was a mix of qualifying, enabling, and inhibiting external influences; school-level influences were predominantly enabling, and there were a couple of significant inhibitors. Teachers' use of their own time was a strong enabling influence, and the majority of teacher influences were enabling.

7.5. Effects

7.5.1. General trends

As in the two preceding studies, a visual representation of perceived effects is shown in the following two charts (Figure 7-3 and Figure 7-4). The two charts are almost identical, demonstrating that if PPA was perceived to give rise to a certain effect, teachers in this school had no reason to suggest that this would not continue into the future. This may reflect the fact that this school was an early adopter with set practices. From left to right along the charts: PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, co-ordination, reflection, collaborative planning, processes, and human resources, and a marginally positive effect on resources. It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, leadership, learning community, and by only a small margin, the same was true of programme coherence, and external support at this school.

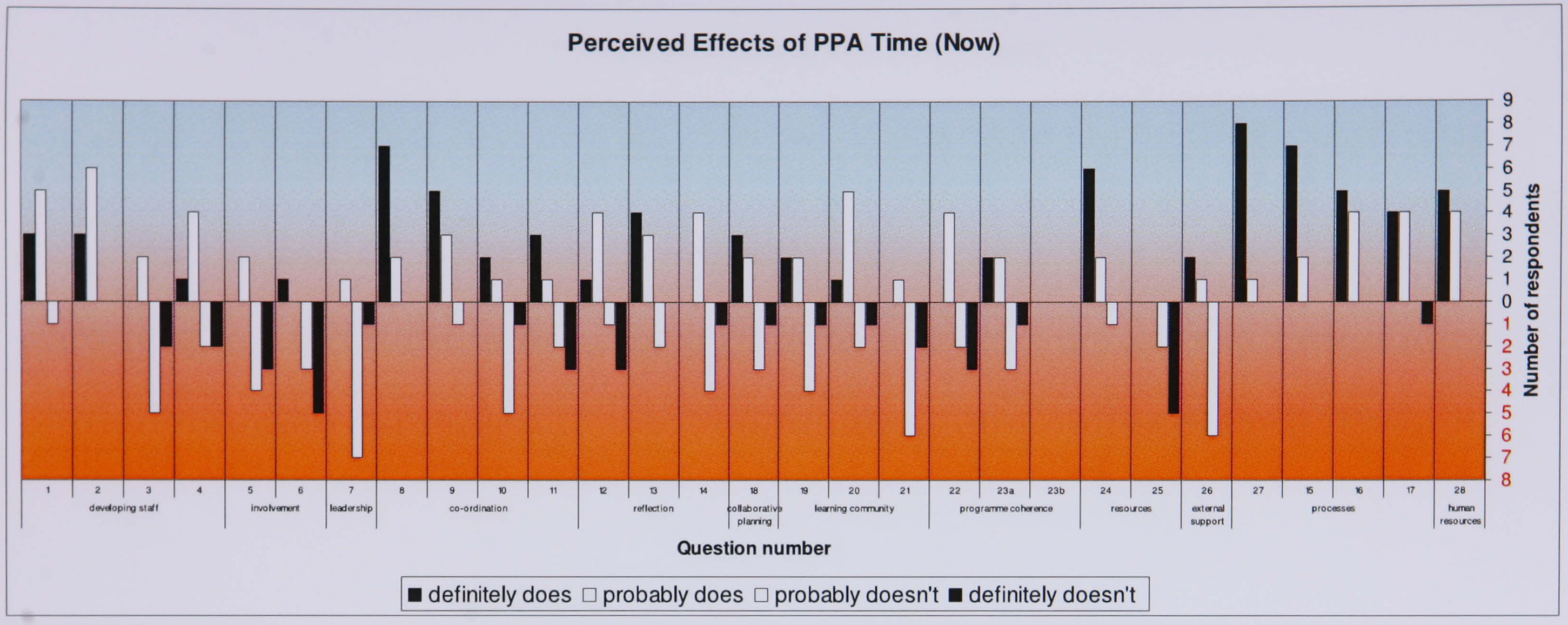

Figure 7-3 The effects PPA is perceived to have now

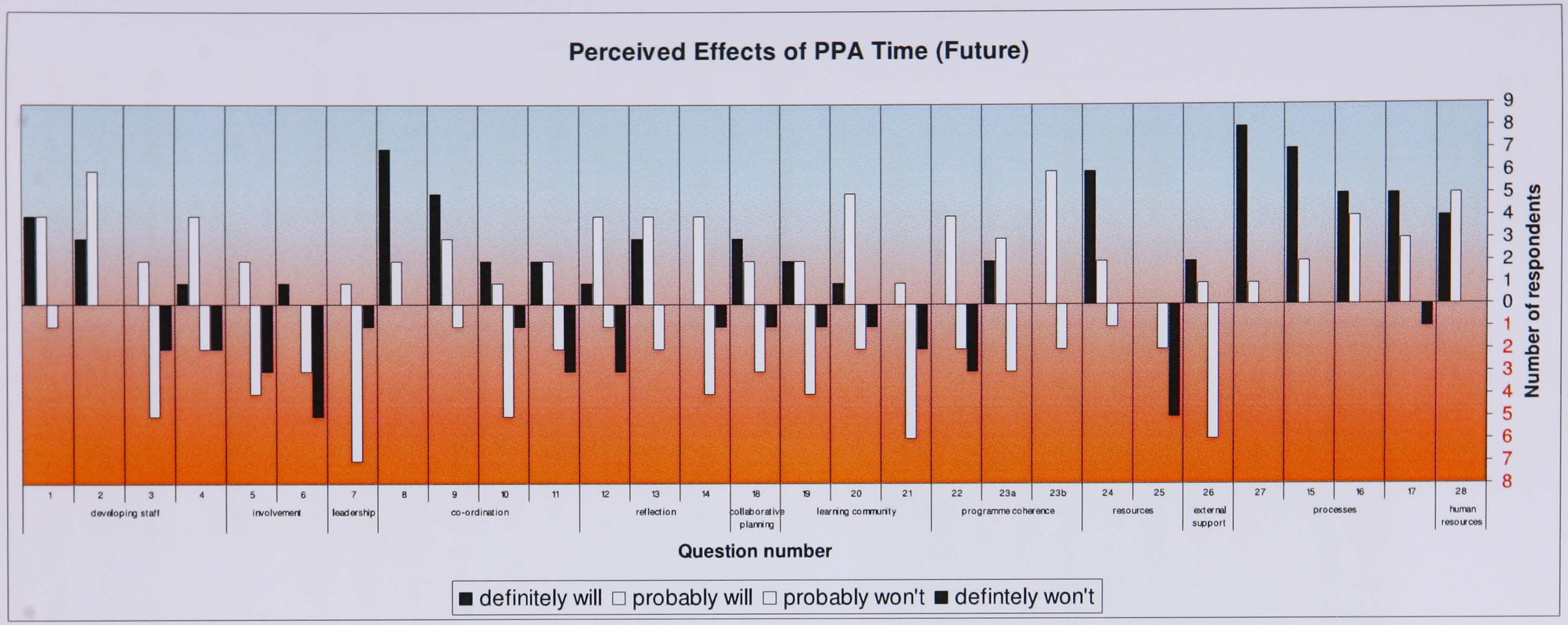

Figure 7-4 The effects PPA may have in the future

The chart below (Figure 7-5) indicates which of these effects were perceived to be important for improvement at this school:

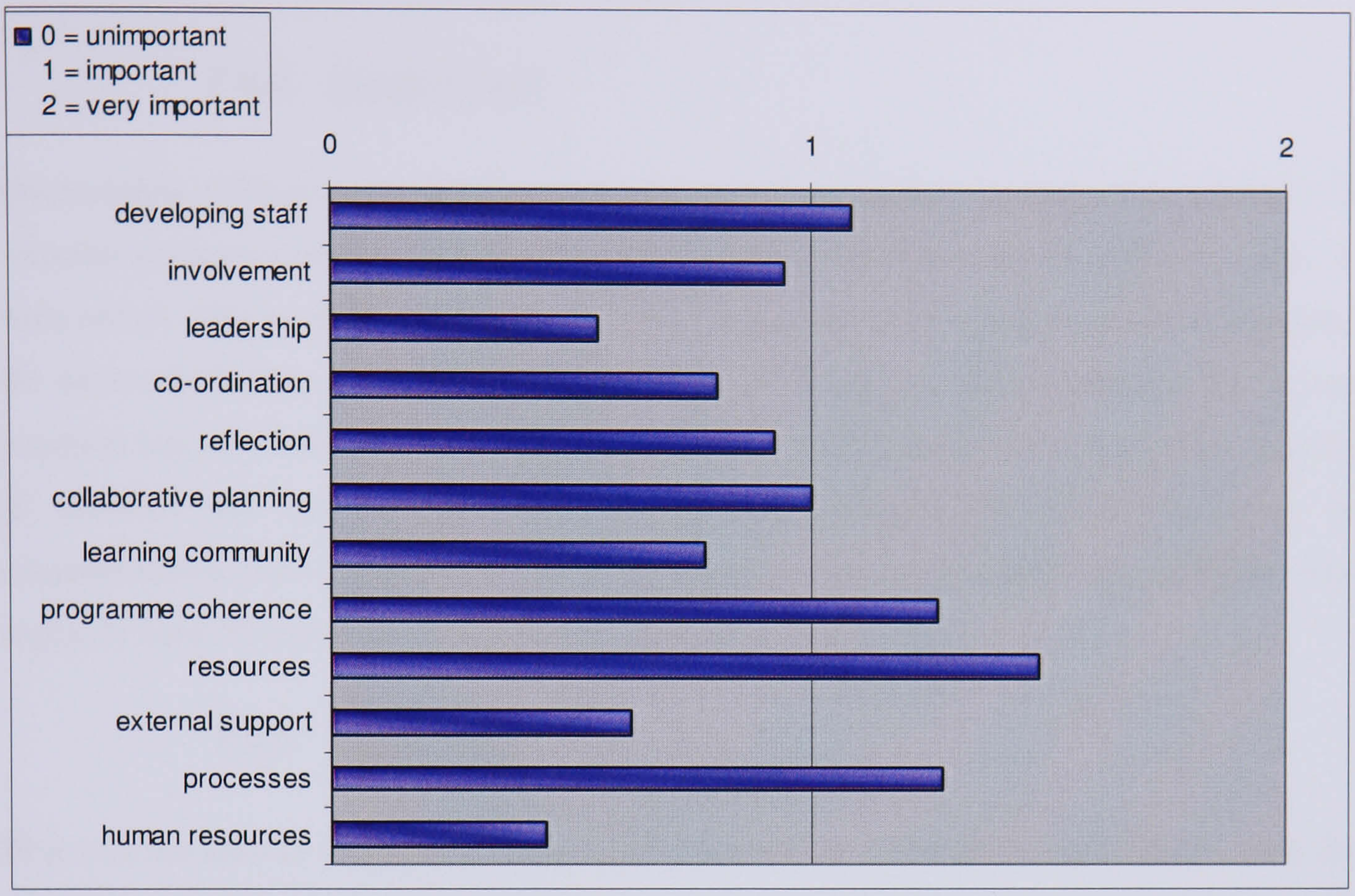

Figure 7-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement

In line with the findings of the school conditions survey, which found all areas it examined to be highly rated (Figure 7-1), Figure 7-5 reflects low priorities for improvement in each of the areas examined by the survey, showing most areas to be less than "important". Comparison of Figure 7-5 with Figure 7-3 and Figure 7-4 shows that of the five areas considered important for improvement, PPA was seen to impact on three of these (developing staff, collaborative planning, and processes), to impact marginally on a fourth (resources), and on the whole not to impact on the fifth (programme coherence), although only marginally so. The following 12 sections explain how PPA was perceived to bring about the effects shown in Figure 7-3 and Figure 7-4

7.5.2. Developing staff

PPA was generally seen to develop teachers' skills at teaching because it allowed time for teachers to be reflective, and it provided time with a colleague so teachers could *"share ideas and...put new things into practice as a result of that."* (2401). Because of the way the school was organised so that partnerships were not static but staff moved across year groups over time, PPA was seen to reinforce the whole school agenda about *"building teams and*

working together" (2403). Where time was not used for assessment this did not improve (1403), and assessment improvements were also seen to come about through other means such as *"focused staff meetings"* (2407, also 2408).

7.5.3. Involvement

Encouraging children to be independent and take responsibility for their own actions was something teachers tried to do regardless of PPA time, which appeared to relate to a school-wide belief: *"We've been doing a lot of work on autonomy for children and thinking skills. We obviously believe in its importance."* (2405). PPA was not seen to enhance this in any practical way, or to provide more opportunities for communication with pupils. The majority of teachers did not consider that PPA would enhance parental involvement, or communication with them in any way. The main exception to this was the SENCO, who regularly used PPA time as an opportunity to meet with parents.

7.5.4. Leadership

PPA was not seen to enhance decision-making powers or opportunities of teachers, with the common theme being that decision making was expected of them: *"I think you'd have to make those decisions anyway"*. (2404). Earlier on in the year a few teachers talked of how discussion with year group colleagues may empower them to take suggestions further, or that it was a time when issues could be discussed, for example, those that came *"via Key Stage meetings that we then will shelve and say "Right we'll discuss that in PPA time" "* (1409).

7.5.5. Co-ordination

Teachers were unanimous in agreeing that PPA would help them to co-ordinate "*rather than co-operate*" (2408) with colleagues by spending that time with their year group partner and TA during the school day. In terms of sharing ideas, several teachers mentioned the time factor, rather than the collaboration factor, that allowed them to share ideas more freely. A couple mentioned its regularity.

7.5.6. Reflection

PPA was on the whole seen to enhance reflection of teachers at the school, particularly in terms of helping people to use strengths of staff given more responsibility during PPA. For example: *"If you know someone's particularly strong in Numeracy then you've got more time to plan and use them within that."* (2403). In terms of developing the school's agenda for improvement, some teachers considered this to be ongoing anyway, or happening

through other means such as through existing working parties. The notion that collaboration was only across year groups also limited this effect. Others were more positive, considering extra time with colleagues may contribute, either as knowledge developed in PPA contributed to formation of that agenda (2401) or that it would facilitate the planning into lessons of key improvement areas (2403).

7.5.7. Collaborative planning

There were mixed views, leaning towards the positive, about whether PPA would help develop school wide aims for pupil learning. PPA was talked of by some as an opportunity to put aspects of the school agenda into place, for example: in that time *"we find ways of putting [what has been proposed in staff meetings] into the planning"* (2409). Two teachers used the example of the school's Writing agenda and one was explicit in suggesting that PPA's strength was in allowing time for thought, action, and *"quality discussion around the things that we are looking to develop"* (2403).

7.5.8. Learning community

On the whole, teachers' answers to questioning here showed they were not positive that PPA would greatly enhance their ability to work as a learning community, although they widely considered it to help them learn through time spent in reflective discussion. It was not seen to enable staff to collaborate to achieve school-wide learning aims because these were focused upon elsewhere and as a whole staff: *"PPA does help, but you can't do it in isolation or in twos, can you."* (2405). Neither was PPA widely seen to provide teachers with opportunities to influence the school's activities and policies, with the exception of two teachers who considered themselves more likely to feed back ideas to the rest of the staff and leadership team if they did so as a pair. This was reflective of The Orchard as *"quite an open school. The Head is there, to listen to ideas that people have."* (2405). Those with leadership roles felt they had sufficient input.

7.5.9. Programme coherence

On the whole, teachers considered plans for their own development were already fairly well tied in to plans for pupil learning, and that existing staff meetings dealt with staff development more than PPA did. In terms of its own sustainability, nobody could be definite about whether or not PPA would continue, although 75% of teachers considered it probably would be. This was considered by a number of teachers to be very much dependent on the cover staff, however, with *"The Achilles heel in PPA [being] that if a member of staff taking*

your class is ill, there are no plans in place for cover for that." (2409). The headteacher did not see PPA time as being a sustainable policy, although he predicted that *"a revolution"* (2400) would result should PPA be revoked.

7.5.10. Resources

PPA was seen to have a positive effect on resources. It meant that *"you've got time to think about the resources that you need"* (2400). It allowed teachers to do their planning in school *"when you've got the resources around"* (2407). Further, PPA time spent with a TA meant that *"you get a lot more things done."* (2408). In terms of financial resources, despite good management on the part of the headteacher, PPA was seen to have *"strong financial implications in terms of staffing and resources that are made available"* (2403). Teachers saw it purely in negative terms because of the cost of employing cover.

7.5.11. External support

On the whole, PPA was not seen to enhance external support with exceptions being its provision of time for making contact with external visitors, and the way it had brought in cover from outside the school. The notion of having extra time to consider who to bring in to school for particular parts of the curriculum was mentioned a little more, earlier on in the year, but in general, teachers did not see PPA in this light because of the way they used their time.

7.5.12. Processes

PPA was widely seen to improve processes, with particular reference to planning. In terms of putting planning into action, there was suggestion that plans could be implemented more fully *"as you want it to"* (2403) because of the extra time and discussion with other teachers about how to carry out plans. Teachers could be more adventurous, *"tak[ing] the opportunity to do something you otherwise might not have had time for"* (2401).

7.5.13. Human resources

Extra time gave teachers the incentive to focus more on their work, be it planning or preparation: *"Because we've got the time, it's not good enough now to say "Oh, we'll do that like we did last year"."* (1401). Working together and sharing ideas *"gets you more excited about what you want to do"* (2401) and having uninterrupted time gave one teacher *"some job satisfaction"* (2405). Having time to work in the day when teachers were more

productive with plenty of ideas to share, and being recognised and paid for that work, was also seen as motivating.

7.6. Capacity

7.6.1. Does PPA build capacity?

With the exception of the headteacher, who saw PPA building capacity only *"as part of the whole workforce remodelling agenda"*, all teachers considered PPA to help build the capacity for improvement at this school. There were six sorts of explanation given for how this was thought to occur:

- Extra time made teachers happier, which one teacher linked to improved delivery in the classroom.
- It gave teachers time to reflect and improve the differentiation within their planning, *"reflecting on what the children have actually achieved"* (2401).
- It gave teachers the opportunity to work together and share ideas *"which you might not necessarily have time to do after school"* (2404).
- It provided a dedicated time in which teachers could better focus *"and use the initiatives that are within the school"*. (2408).
- It gave teachers the opportunity to work when they were at their most productive, *"in the morning, [when] we are fresh and motivated to do something a bit different"* (2408).
- It recognised the work teachers were doing. *"[B]ecause you've been given the time you don't feel that you're put upon"* (2409) which made them more willing to try new things and more able to think strategically.

7.6.2. What is capacity building?

Teachers considered the notion of capacity building to reflect one of two things. For some, it related to the presence of a 'gap' in provision, where schools *"have got room to make improvements"* (2401), with one teacher suggesting this was always the case in any school. Having the capacity to improve meant that *"an even better teaching and learning environment"* (2405) was required to meet the broad educational and developmental needs of the children.

For an equal number of teachers, a school with capacity to improve was one with *"Potential."* (2404). Such a school would have certain resources in place such as *"the*

abilities...the time and resources" (2409) *or "the time, resources, input from external people"* (2408), or *"the willingness and motivation"* (2407). Under this sort of definition, PPA contributed to that improvement because of its provision of time, although *"there's a shortage of time even with PPA. It's just the nature of the beast."* (2409). For the headteacher, development of a *"self-resourcing"* school would allow PPA to happen in the most effective way. To build capacity in this way, a school needed certain resources in order to develop the flexible and effective working teams, with school-specific knowledge, that would make the school self-resourcing. These resources were *"a culture of openness, co-operation and a belief in professional development"* (1400).

The importance of continuous improvement was implicit in one teacher's comment that: *"[capacity for improvement] means that we are forever widening what we've got to offer"* (2405). One teacher suggested improvement depended on *"time and resources"* (2408) being in place to ensure the abilities teachers already had could be used to their best advantage.

7.7. Summary

7.7.1. Strategy

The Orchard adopted a mixed strategy, providing cover for classes by three types of teacher (the SENCO, an HLTA, and two specialist teachers), and by extension of contracts for external teachers providing cover. Most cover was for discrete elements of the curriculum including Music, P.E. and R.E. reflecting the specialisms of the cover teachers and the preferences of the school for reasons of continuity and simplicity.

7.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

At both ends of the year, the purpose of PPA was seen in terms of work/life balance and improved working, with improved working becoming more dominant. Changes in perception of purpose over the year were primarily the inclusion of improved working, or the failure to mention work/life balance. Standards were mentioned, although less frequently in both rounds of interview and only one teacher explicitly added standards as the year progressed. The headteacher's expressed opinion showed the most marked change: from standards at the end of the academic year 2004/05, to work/life balance twelve months later.

The school's capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes was considered the most likely school level outcome throughout the year. Teacher outcomes, particularly reflection

and learning, were considered to be facilitated by collaborative working during PPA, and the extra time it provided. The majority of teachers also considered better work/life balance to be a likely outcome.

7.7.3. *Time*

Three reasons explained why planning tended to dominate PPA time: collaborative working practices meant it was seen as the best use of time, it was seen as a prerequisite to other activities, and the headteacher had placed an expectation upon teachers.

In terms of PPA's effects on time, on the whole it was seen to give time back to teachers by enhancing their efficiency and reducing their working week.

7.7.4. *Influences*

Key findings were as follows, and are shown in Table 7-8:

- As can be seen from the 'affected by' column, leadership was perceived to be a key influence, as it influences other 'influences'. The same was true of the school's 'size' because it allowed collaboration between year group partners.
- The structural influence of TAs working alongside teachers during PPA time, had efficiency implications.
- Influences were mixed, although predominantly comprised qualifiers and enablers. The policy itself was the greatest source of inhibitors, and an area over which the school had no impact. A lack of funding made development of TAs a necessary school strategy.
- Funding, leadership, and structures were the key influences upon 'influences'.
- Those areas that were within the realm of control of the school were predominantly enablers.

7.7.5. *Effects*

The summary table below shows the effects PPA was seen to have, or not to have, at this school according to interview evidence; and the sorts of influences impacting upon whether or not they were associated with PPA. Ticks represent an influence that had a positive impact upon a particular effect. Crosses represent an influence that had a negative bearing on an effect. Key findings were:

- PPA time had a clear positive effect on: co-ordination, reflection, collaborative planning, human resources, developing staff, resources, and processes; the latter three of which were considered important for improvement at this school. It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, leadership, learning community, programme coherence, or external support here. Of these, only programme coherence was considered important for improvement here.
- Inherent policy details, structures, and teachers' use of PPA time were three influences that the effects associated with PPA had in common.

		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor	Effects of PPA: Associated with PPA: Developing staff	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Co-ordination	Processes	Resources	Human resources	Not associated with PPA: External support	Involvement	Leadership	Programme coherence	Learning community
External	Community	✓														
	Political action/tone		✓													
	External pressure	✓													✓	
	Inherent policy details	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ×	✓	✓				
School	Mix of pupils	✓														
	Support staff		✓			✓										
	History			✓						×						
	Culture	✓											×			×
	Leadership		✓													
	Structures		✓	✓	✓	✓ ×		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	×	✓ ×
Teacher	Experience / role	✓	✓											×		×
	Beliefs	✓														
	Skills	✓	✓													
	Use of PPA time		✓	(✓)		×	✓		✓	✓		× ✓	✓ ×		×	✓

Table 7-9 Summary of links between 'influences' and 'effects'

7.7.6. *Capacity building*

PPA was considered to build capacity, albeit as part of a wider agenda, and for a number of reasons including its effect on teachers' motivation and effectiveness, and its provision of time for reflection and opportunity to work together. Ideas on what 'capacity for improvement' might mean included both having the need to improve, and having the resources to improve, namely time, abilities, physical resources, and an open culture. PPA was seen to build capacity particularly because of its provision of the time resource.

8. Analysis School 5 – Underwood First School

8.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from Underwood First School. This case follows the same layout as previous cases, with a summary of key findings to conclude the chapter.

8.1.1. School pupil context

	Total number of pupils on roll	Pupils eligible for KS2 tests	Total number and percentage of pupils with SEN				Average Key Stage 1 Point Score (Reading, Writing, Maths)
			with statements		without statements		
			Number	%	Number	%	
LA Average				5.30		16.10	
England Average				3.30		15.90	15.4
Underwood First	67	0	1	1.50	5	7.50	17.5

	% half days missed due to	
	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
LA Average	5.20	0.20
England Average	5.00	0.40
Underwood First	3.80	0.00

Table 8-1 Attainment table, Underwood First. Source: (OfSTED, 2006a)

OfSTED last inspected this small First school in 2005, at the commencement of this research. Information was taken from that report. National and LA information was taken from the school's Panda report and from OfSTED's 2005 attainment tables. Prior to that inspection the school had experienced a turbulent period, having had major staffing and leadership changes on its move out of serious weaknesses. It was a small village school, with nearly twice as many boys as girls, drawing from a catchment of above average socio-economic indicators. The school had achieved a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Schools Achievement Award, and Leading Aspect Award, and the FA Charter Mark. Overall the school was deemed to be satisfactory and rapidly improving with good leadership showing potential for further positive change. During the period of research, a major change involved the appointment of a new Reception / Year 1 teacher who has made a significant contribution. By the end of the period of research, the Local Authority Inspector recommended the school pursue Category 1 status to become a recognised centre of exemplary practice within the county.

8.1.2. School conditions

The School Conditions Survey (section 3.5.3.4) yielded a 70% rate of return (n=14) from a representative sample as shown in Table 3-9. From the chart below it can be seen that, within this school, scores for all five conditions fell between 'often' and 'nearly always'. It can be also be seen that no single stakeholder group tended to rate school conditions more highly than another.

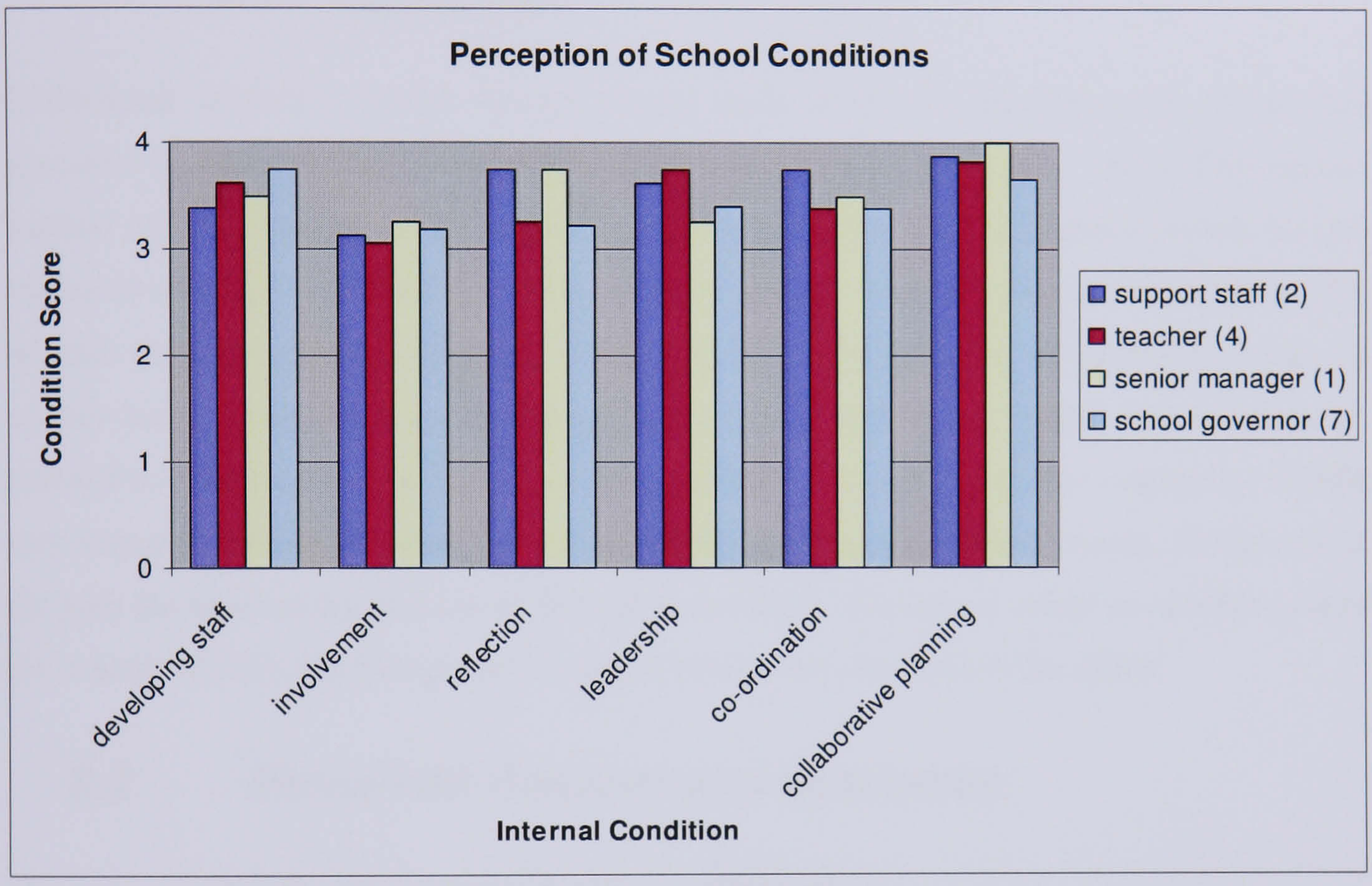

Figure 8-1 Chart showing stakeholder perceptions of Underwood's internal conditions

8.1.3. Interviewees

With the exception of the headteacher, who was interviewed once as a teacher and twice as a head but not observed, all teachers at the school were interviewed twice and observed, as shown:

Name	Role	Gender	Contract
Chris (1500/2500/1504)	Headteacher / Teacher	Male	Full time
Jill (1501/2501)	Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Part time
Carol (1502/2502)	Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time

Louise (1504)	Teacher / Key Stage Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Elaine (2505)	Teacher (NQT) / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time

Table 8-2 Interview participants at Underwood

8.1.4. PPA Strategy

Underwood adopted a mixed strategy, whose main focus was the contracting of an Arts specialist to cover the PPA time of the full time teachers for years R, 1, and 2. This teacher worked with the support of the school's two TAs. Quality was the primary reason for this choice of strategy: *"As governors we agreed we did not want to compromise on the quality of what we were offering children"* (2500). Of the remaining staff, one part time Year 3/4 teacher had her contract extended and took the time nominally at home. The headteacher, planned to combine his and take it in monthly blocks *"So you've got that continuity"* (1500) and during this time, the other teacher would be paid extra to provide cover. At the end of the year the headteacher had not in fact taken this time *"because it would be another cost to the school"* (2500) and because he tended to build it in to his time in the office.

8.2. Perceived Purpose and Outcomes

8.2.1. Perceived purpose of PPA time

8.2.1.1. Work/life balance

At the beginning and end of the research period, the headteacher was firmly of the belief that the policy had been designed primarily to redress the issue of teachers' work/life balance. He believed this was framed by a wider concern that in ten years time there would be a real shortage of teachers, and so considered this a two-pronged approach: firstly by attracting professionals; secondly by ensuring a qualified body of TAs. Similarly, staff opinions at the beginning of the year were indicative of the pressure government were under to improve the burden on teachers both for the purposes of recruitment and for retention. For example, *"whether it's too many people leaving the profession and they're trying to encourage more people into doing it; whether people say the workload is too much, I don't know."* (1502). At the end of the research period, however, not one teacher mentioned work/life balance.

8.2.1.2. Work/life balance leading to standards

The headteacher did not agree that work/life balance and standards could be explicitly linked without further evidence: *"I think it's stopping people leaving the profession. Whether people leaving will cause standards to drop, I don't know."* (1504). Only one teacher linked reduced stress to classroom outcomes.

8.2.1.3. Standards

The headteacher did not believe a policy with so little funding attached to it could be about raising standards of attainment: *"Who would sit down and voluntarily say that if I want to raise standards in my school I must give that teacher an afternoon off with no extra money to find a way of covering the class?"* (1500). There were a variety of ways PPA was linked to raised standards, however, including better preparation of resources that were *"bound to impinge on the children"* (1503), reduced stress, and the enhanced Arts curriculum (1500). Perhaps most significantly in this school, the head, along with two teachers at the end of the year, pinpointed the increased opportunity specifically for the assessment side of PPA, which linked back to the provision of extra time, and the creation of more relevant lessons (1500, 2501, 2502). In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of purpose
Round 1	An overall recognition of two agendas: primarily work / life balance, but standards and progress in learning were also acknowledged.
Round 2	Primarily standards. Most emphasis on provision of time to allow monitoring of learning through assessment.

Table 8-3 Summary of perceptions of purpose over the year

8.2.2. Perceived outcomes of PPA time

8.2.2.1. School's capacity to do something

When first interviewed, the headteacher considered all three sorts of outcome likely *"and not necessarily in any hierarchical order"* (1504) although he was still to be convinced that improved pupil learning and outcomes would result. Of the teachers, two considered only school outcomes, and a third thought these second most likely, with work/life balance, as an 'other' outcome, being most likely. By the end of the year, school outcomes were considered the most likely by all bar one teacher, in this case, the headteacher, who considered work/life balance the most likely to arise. Across the year the overall pattern remained largely the

same: that teachers considered that 'school' outcomes were most likely; the headteacher, although open to the possibility, remained more sceptical. Of the school outcomes, pupil learning and outcomes tended to be considered most likely.

8.2.2.2. Teachers' capacities for things

The notion that PPA would enhance teacher capabilities and skills in certain areas stemmed from its provision of extra time. The headteacher linked extra time with development of a range of skills such as reflection, which *"would also impact on your classroom teaching"* (1500), although cautioning that improvements in their propensities for learning was *"dependent on the individual...their quality of reflection, and their abilities as a self-learner anyway."* (1504). By the end of the year he had further changed his view of PPA's ability to affect this area saying that those sorts of things are *"achieved in other ways."* (2500).

8.2.2.3. Other outcomes

On the whole, teachers did not mention any other outcomes they considered to arise from PPA. The single exception associated PPA with eased workload, but went on to tie this in to pupil learning and outcomes, suggesting that *"you're going to be more at ease and less stressful and that's got to help"* (1503). The headteacher also believed that work/life balance of teachers would be improved (1504). In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of outcome
Round 1	Primarily 'school'.
Round 2	Primarily 'school'.

Table 8-4 Summary of perceptions of outcome over the year

8.3. Time

As for the four preceding cases, this section examines the emergent theme 'time'. Interviews and diaries provide the source of information here, and Table 3-10 shows the number of diaries kept. Breakdown of time spend is shown in Figure 8-2.

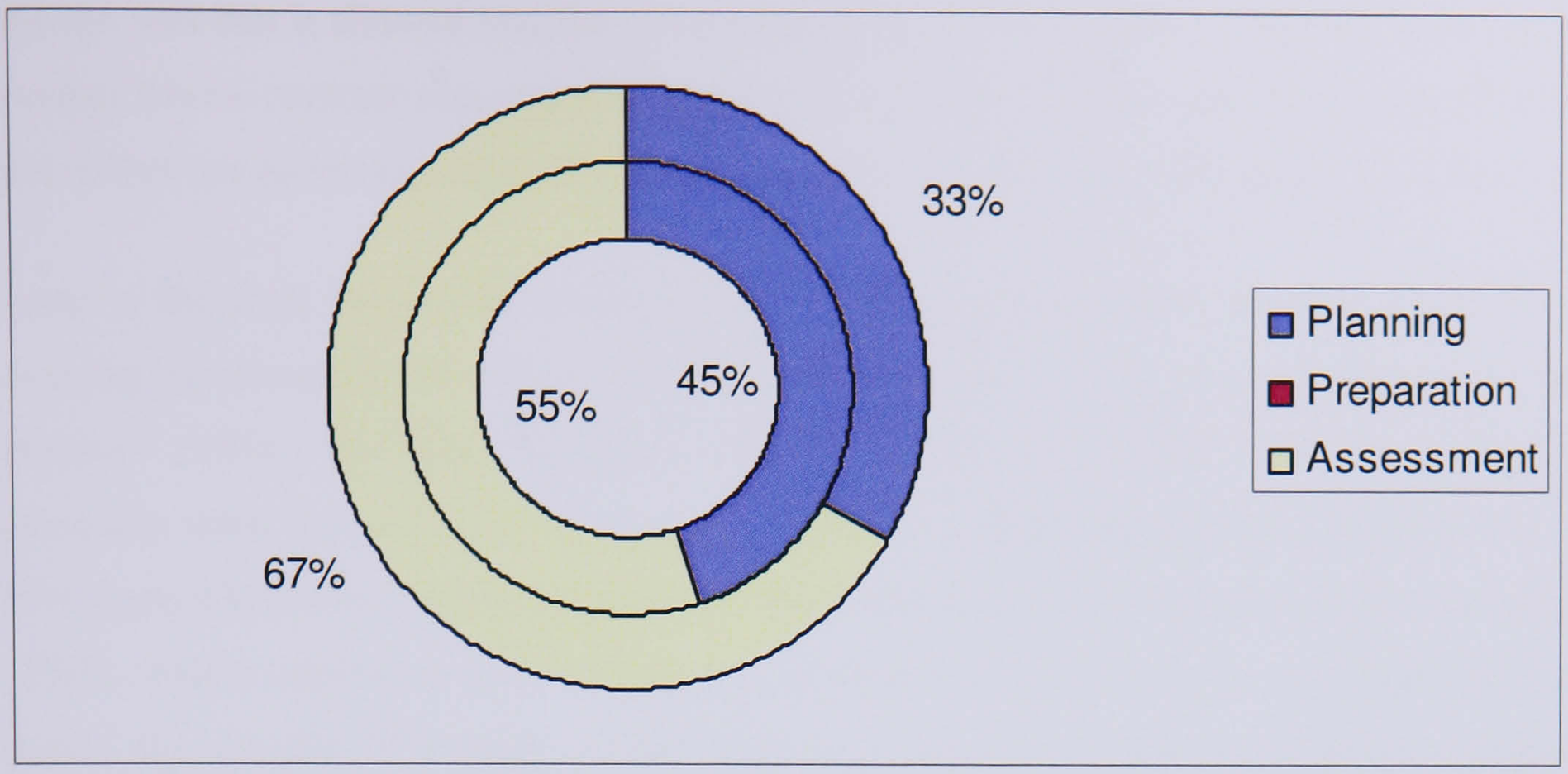

Figure 8-2 Comparison of term 1 diaries (inner circle) with term 3 diaries (outer circle)

8.3.1. *Influences on how time is spent*

In the autumn term of 2005, there was little mention of planning during PPA time, and only one teacher referred to preparation done during PPA. One teacher was able to spend more time evaluating plans and focusing on objectives. Another talked of planning and assessment as linked activities and evidence from her PPA log showed that, for the two weeks out of four where she received her PPA time, time was divided fairly evenly between planning and assessment (1502). By the summer term, two teachers were doing some planning. One believed planning took her longest due to her level of experience, although her diary evidenced two weeks worth of PPA spent on assessment, to only one week planning.

The headteacher was keen to ensure that *"the 'assessment' bit...doesn't get left out of the equation"* (1502), pointing out that teachers may focus more on getting planning and preparation out of the way in order to maximise the efficacy of PPA in reducing their workload. Teachers recognised the priority of assessment at Underwood and many comments related to its usefulness in providing opportunities for assessment. The comment from one teacher: *"we like to think that we're a bit further along the line here"* (1502) reflected the way in which other schools may not realise the importance of assessing during PPA.

8.3.2. *The effect of having extra time*

The headteacher saw the change as being twofold: first, from working *"in school time, rather than out of school"*, thereby gaining time for themselves. At the beginning of the year, two teachers made reference to gaining time for themselves (1502/3). The second

change was that it allowed teachers time to assess and reflect more in depth (1504). For the teacher whose contract was extended, however, there was no time saving because PPA did not reduce her classroom teaching. PPA did not enhance her work/life balance, only her pay.

Later in the year, two teachers talked of being more efficient. One, because it was in the working environment and away from home distractions: *"I'd do [my planning] ten times quicker"* (1502); the other, because it was in the working week *"not like a Saturday afternoon when I've just done my shopping."* (1503). A third said she had learned to use her PPA more effectively: *"getting quicker at things, knowing what's important and what's not"* (2505), which implied a sense of urgency generated by that time. In agreement with the head's concern that PPA might *"actually generate more work than if you weren't carrying out those assessments in depth"* (2500), one teacher argued PPA had not generated a like-for-like time saving because however much work she did, there was always more to do. For himself, the headteacher considered his workload had been added to initially, in terms of putting a strategy in place, monitoring it, and making savings in other areas *"to accommodate it"* (2500).

8.4. Influences

As for the three preceding studies, influences on provision of, and effects of, PPA time were examined under three categories: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher' influences.

8.4.1. External influences

Of Stoll's (1999) five external influences, only one (political action) was considered influential here. A further emergent finding was that the policy itself bore influence. The following series of analytical statements explore each of the influences at Underwood.

Influence	Findings
Political action and tone	Political views of those in power *"and their views on the state of school funding"* (2500) were considered to bear influential on continuity of the policy: *"[the headteacher] has every intention of keeping it up. As long as government say it's fine and it's allowable [it will continue]."* (2502). For as long as the government considered this policy viable, this influence would be a 'qualifier'.
Inherent policy details	The headteacher believed that maximum benefits of PPA would have arisen if he was given the finances to put it in place, and the freedom to be more directive. The notion that heads could not direct PPA time led the headteacher to comment that *"I'm not convinced that what we spend*

	on PPA time gives me value for money because...I have little input...about how people might like to use their PPA time." (2500). A lack of policy funding and the inability to be directive, as policy details, would be considered 'inhibitors'. The fact that it provided teachers with extra time and showed them that their work was recognised by those in authority, however, would be 'enablers'. Extra time facilitated a range of PPA's effects; namely developing staff, reflection, learning community, programme coherence, processes, and human resources.

Table 8-5 External influences at Underwood

8.4.2. School influences

Of Stoll's (1999) nine school influences, only power issues and morale did not arise as pertinent influences at Underwood. There were no emergent findings at school-level. The following series of analytical statements explore each of the influences.

Influence	Findings
History	In terms of historical influences, those most pertinent at this school were size, recently turbulent history, and particular *"areas that are priorities for the school"* (2500). The deficit budget meant PPA was run *"at the expense of something else"* (2500) and so finances were an 'inhibitor'. Size of the school was also an inhibitor as it impacted the choice of strategy by limiting opportunity for TA cover. It also meant collaboration happened less frequently in PPA time (1502, 1504). In terms of school priorities, one teacher considered these more likely to affect decision-making in the school than PPA would: *"I think it's driven by where the school is at the moment and that there is a need to assess."* (1501), although priorities, such as assessment, were reflected and further developed during PPA. Priorities were therefore both an 'enabler' and 'inhibitor'.
Culture	A community oriented culture 'inhibited' PPA from causing teachers to bring in more people from the outside. A positive and open culture where communication was informal and free-flowing 'inhibited' PPA from appearing to enhance co-ordination because it was perceived as positive anyway. Formalisation was considered unnecessary in this school *"because of its size, and relationships that exist"* (2500). On the other hand, levels of communication were conducive to positive working, and a necessity in an environment where formalisation was not practical, and teachers worked alone. This factor was, therefore, a 'qualifier'.

Mix of pupils	The *"largely well-adjusted, well-balanced children"* (1504) here had no problems adjusting to the change associated with PPA time, and as such, could be referred to as 'qualifiers'.
Leadership	The head articulated the importance of leadership as an influence on the benefits of PPA time by suggesting that *"if the Head doesn't have a wider view or is unclear about their vision, I would argue that the opportunity to maximise [PPA's] potential would actually be wasted"* (1500). Consensus on the importance of the assessment element of PPA could largely be attributed to leadership on the part of the headteacher, who had generated awareness of the new Assessment for Learning initiative (1502) and actively made *"suggestions about how people might like to use their PPA time."* (2500). This influence would be considered an 'enabler'.
Structures	PPA time cover arrangements for Foundation and Key Stage 1 had been beneficial to children's learning in that they were *"having one very full afternoon of a subject"* (1501). These arrangements also allowed for co-operation should the two teachers concerned require that *"in the future"* (2505, and 1502) and could be seen as 'enablers'. For the teacher whose PPA time was an add-on to her contract, it was much harder to attribute differences to PPA because it was difficult *"to differentiate between my time out of school and my PPA time"* (2501). In this sense, the arrangement 'inhibited' benefits. Where arrangements related to accommodation, teachers spending PPA away from school was a contributing factor to PPA not generally being seen to enhance co-operation or co-ordination. Although the potentially beneficial effects of working together were not enhanced by PPA arrangements, losses were mitigated by the co-operative ethos and small size of the school, which contributed to PPA-related informal discussions. As a factor on its own, however, accommodation must be considered an 'inhibitor'. Reinforcing PPA through existing structures, such as staff meetings, helped teachers to use PPA time in a more beneficial way that was *"linked up with our staff meetings...where we are discussing how children are becoming effective learners"* (2501). Further, PPA could influence this process by providing time for teachers to consider these areas and then *"lead staff meetings to develop [a certain area] further"*. (2501). These arrangements could be seen as 'enablers'.
Teacher relationships	Relationships between teachers were positive and would be an 'enabler'. Co-operation was considered a strength *"because of relationships that exist"* (2500) combined with the size of the school. This promoted idea

	sharing and helped maximise the benefits of PPA time.
Support staff	An absence of support staff willing to be developed into the role of HLTA could be considered an 'inhibitor' to the benefits of PPA. This factor was influenced by the size of the school. Support staff did 'qualify' PPA strategy to work, however, in the sense that their presence and assistance was required in the classroom to support the number of children in the Art sessions.

Table 8-6 School influences at Underwood

8.4.3. Teacher influences

Of Stoll's eight teacher influences, two were seen as influential here (sense of interdependence, and skills), and there was one emergent finding: 'use of PPA time'.

Influence	Findings
Sense of interdependence	Of the range of teacher-level influences on maximising the benefits of PPA time, the headteacher saw teachers' awareness of the wider picture as being most significant and, therefore, an enabler. By this, he meant that teachers who recognised they were part of a wider team were able to adopt more constructive working patterns as they recognised *"it's not simply your own little box of time, but there's a wider context there"*. (1500).
Skills	Success of PPA in this school depended heavily on ensuring skilled cover (both the Arts specialist and the TAs) was in place, because *"if you have people who demonstrate appropriate skills you can develop and extend those."* (1500). Skills of the cover teacher and TAs were 'enablers'. Teachers' skills, which the headteacher suggested could be built on further, were an important basis for ensuring the benefits of PPA were maximised *"because of their capabilities as well and their own level of skill I know that they will use that time effectively."* (1500). Skills of teachers would be viewed as qualifiers here.
Use of time	Whether or not teachers maximised PPA's potential for enhancing their skills in certain areas, particularly learning, was considered by the headteacher to be dependent on how they spent that time *"their quality of reflection, and their abilities as a self-learner anyway"*. Further, the focus on assessment was said to be key to maximising the benefits of PPA time: *"[Assessment] is the key. A lot of your questions [about the effects of PPA] that I said "yes" to were assessment-based. The planning and the preparation bit will have little impact, I think, on*

	achievement." (1504). This factor would, therefore, be considered an 'enabler'. Beneficial use of time also included subject area monitoring; target setting; reflection; specific subject planning; and reviewing planning. (1504).

Table 8-7 Teacher influences at Underwood

The following table gives an overall summary of influences on PPA's effects at Underwood. As can be seen from the 'affected by' column leadership was perceived to be a key influence. Significant also was the school's size, which contributed to an open culture and informal, co-operative relationships. In summary, while external and school influences were predominantly a mixture of inhibitors and enablers, teacher influences were mostly enablers.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES		Affected by	Q	E	I
Political action/tone					
	Political will / legislation		✓		
Inherent policy details					
	Extra time			✓	
	Funding				✓
	Non-directive role of Head				✓
	Sense of valuing teachers			✓	
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
History					
	Size				✓
	Finances				✓
	Turbulence	Leadership			(✓)
	Priorities	Leadership		✓	✓
Culture					
	Positive / open	Size			✓
	Community oriented				✓
	Co-operative		✓		
Mix of pupils					
	Positive attitudes / behaviour		✓		
Leadership					
	Influence over activities			✓	
	Vision			✓	
Structures					
	PPA strategy (cover)	Leadership		✓	
	PPA strategy (contract extension)	Leadership			✓
	PPA strategy (collaboration)`			(✓)	
	Staff meetings	Leadership		✓	
	Accommodation				✓
Relationships		Size		✓	
Support staff					
	Provided a solution		✓		

	Lack of willingness				✓
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Interdependence				✓	
Skills					
	Of cover teacher			✓	
	Of teachers		✓		
Use of PPA time					
	Subject area monitoring			✓	
	Assessment	Leadership		✓	
	Reflection			✓	
	Specific subject planning			✓	
	Reviewing planning			✓	

Table 8-8 Summary of influences on PPA's implementation at Underwood

8.5. Effects

8.5.1. General trends

As in the two preceding studies, a visual representation of perceived effects is shown in the following two charts (Figure 8-3 and Figure 8-4). The two charts are very similar in shape, demonstrating that in general, if PPA was perceived to give rise to a certain effect, teachers in this school had no reason to suggest that this would not continue into the future. Further, where answers changed between 'now' and 'future', in most cases these reflect more definite positive answers in the future. In this school, teachers generally considered practice would enhance their use of PPA time. From left to right along the charts: PPA time had a clear positive effect on processes and human resources, and a marginally positive effect on developing staff. It was not generally perceived to positively affect involvement, leadership, co-ordination, reflection, collaborative planning, resources, or external support at this school. Similarly, differences of opinion about learning community, and programme coherence meant that by a small margin, the same was true of these effects.

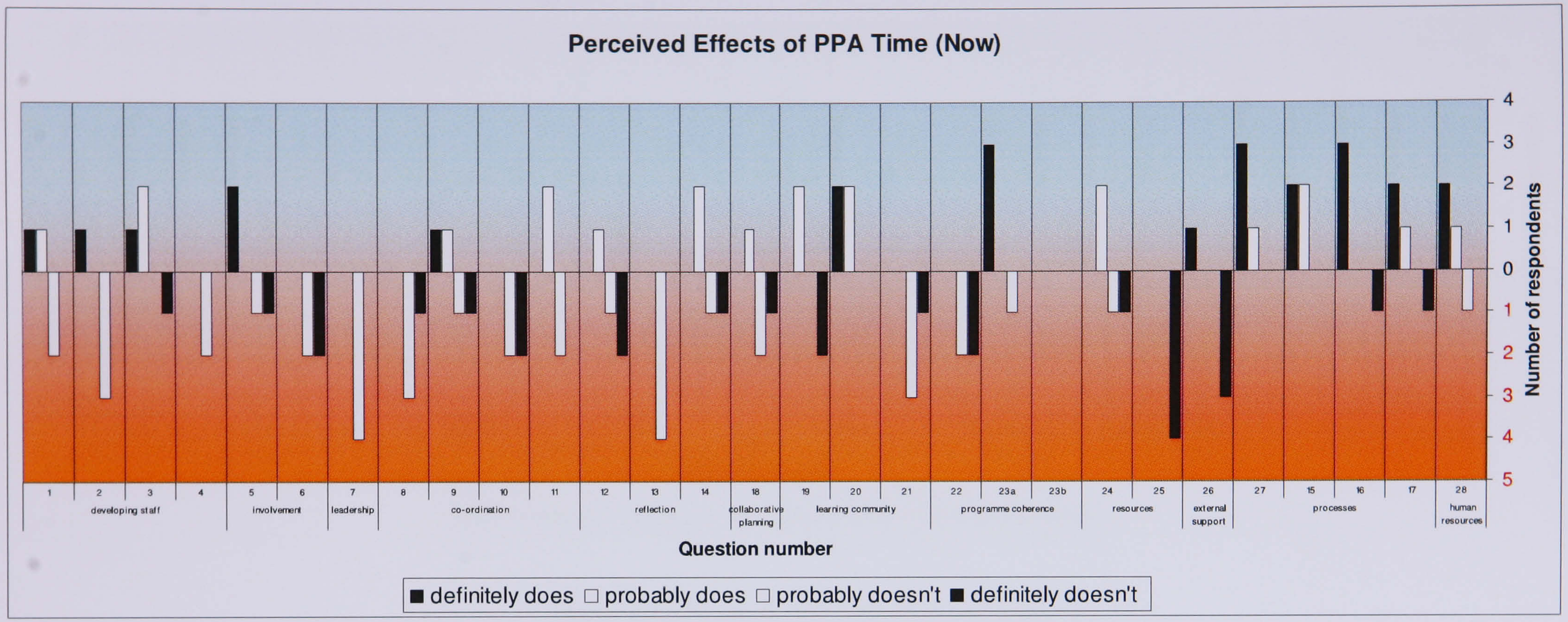

Figure 8-3 The effects PPA is perceived to have now.

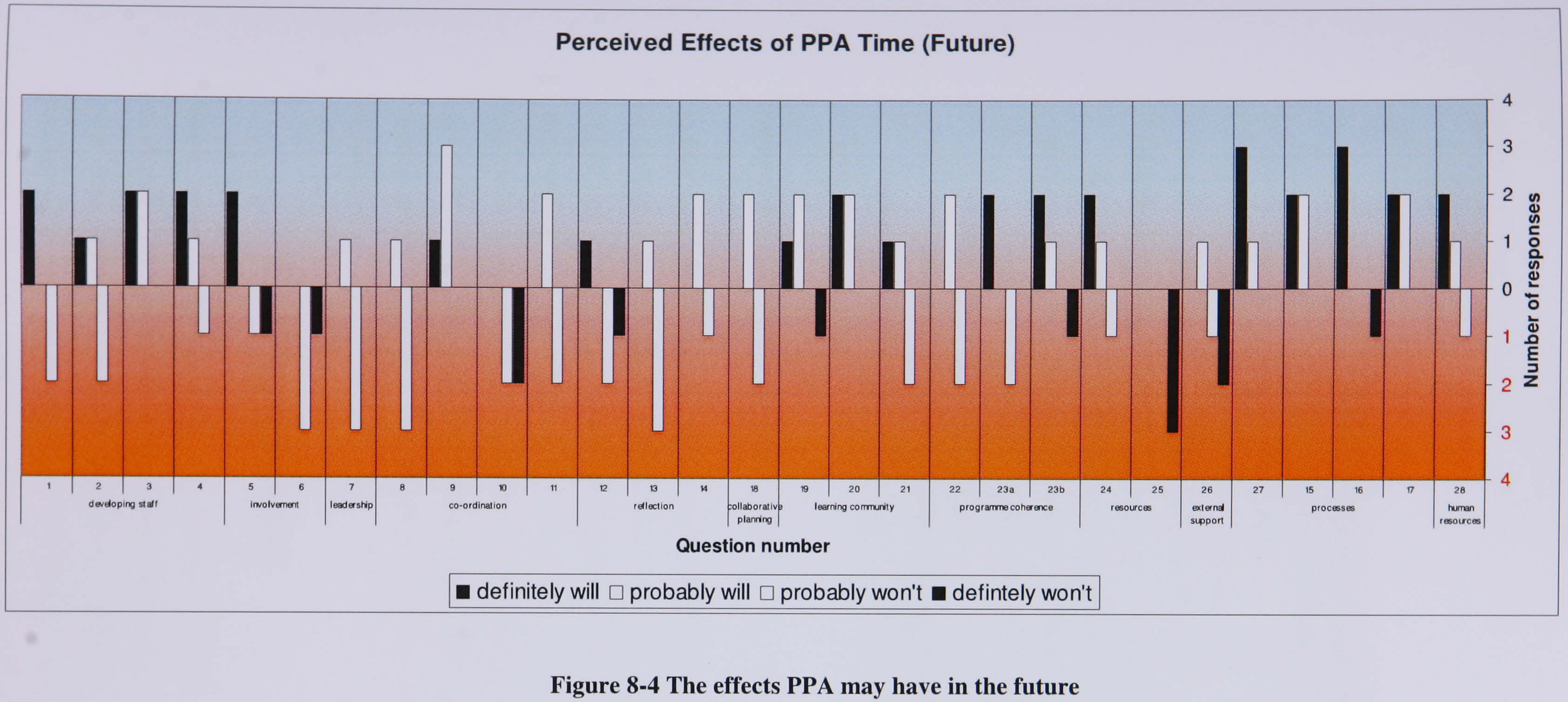

Figure 8-4 The effects PPA may have in the future

The chart immediately below (Figure 8-5) indicates which effects were perceived to be important for improvement at this school.

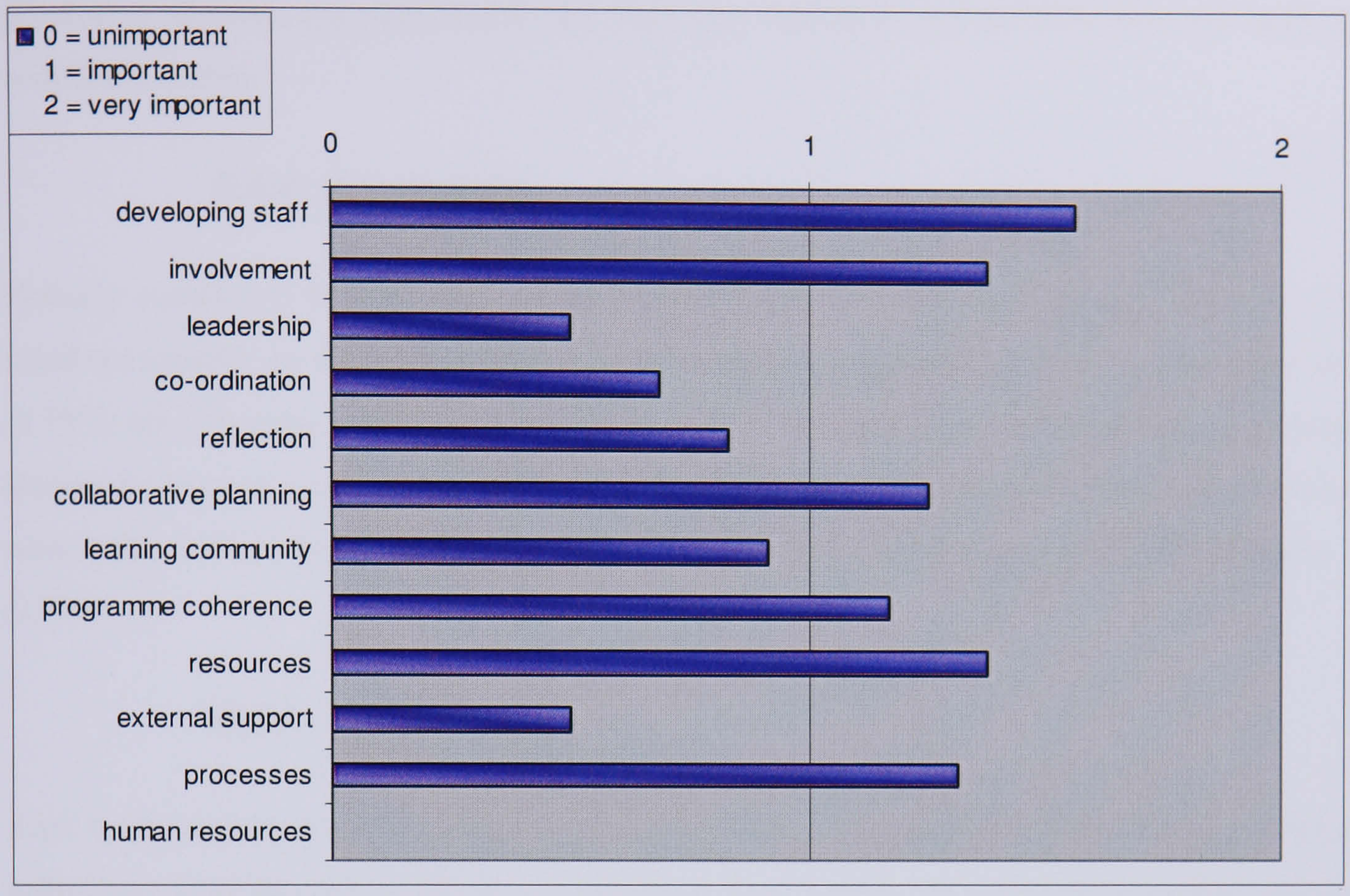

Figure 8-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement

In line with the findings of the school conditions survey, which found all areas it examined to be highly rated with the exception of 'involvement' (Figure 8-1), Figure 8-5 shows that this is one of the areas considered important for improvement. Comparison of Figure 8-5 with Figure 8-3 and Figure 8-4 indicates that of the six areas held most important for improvement (score ≥ 1 on Figure 8-5), PPA was considered to improve only two (processes and developing staff), and one of these, only marginally (developing staff). The following 12 sections explain how PPA was perceived to bring about the effects shown in Figure 8-3 and Figure 8-4.

8.5.2. Developing staff

Extra time, *"dependent upon the teacher"* (2500) and their use of that time, was the mechanism by which PPA could further develop teachers' skills. This was particularly the case with teachers' skills at assessment, although as commented upon by a couple of teachers, this was *"on the agenda"* (1501) at the time anyway, so attribution to PPA was not universal. Teachers considered their awareness of children's learning would be enhanced because of their *"opportunities to engage in more reflective thought"* (1504).

8.5.3. Involvement

The notion of involving children in their own learning was one that the school was actively promoting through the Assessment for Learning initiative and so PPA was not seen to contribute to this.

8.5.4. Leadership

Nobody considered PPA to enhance their opportunities for decision-making. This was not ruled out entirely for the future, however, and there was suggestion on two occasions that use of PPA may become refined in the future, giving *"leaders more opportunities to develop initiatives around particularly assessment"* (1504). The particular priorities and decisions were more *"driven by where the school is at the moment and that there is a need to assess."* (1501).

8.5.5. Co-ordination

Staff were positive that PPA would enhance sharing of ideas, particularly through helping colleagues work through issues they might have trouble with. PPA was not generally seen to significantly enhance co-operation and co-ordination, however, because collaborative working was considered unnecessary in a school where *"Co-operation [is] a strength of the school because of its size, and also because of relationships that exist"* (2500). The teacher on an extended contract attributed some level of enhanced collaboration, *"particularly relating to the subjects I am Co-ordinator for"* (2501) and enhanced moderation work, to PPA, however.

8.5.6. Reflection

PPA was not generally seen to enhance reflection in terms of development of the school's improvement agenda, and of its recognition of strengths. The improvement agenda was considered to be something that arose from staff meetings, rather than during PPA. If it helped the school to monitor improvement this was seen to be down to extra time, and individuals' use of that extra time: *"people have got time to review their planning in a little bit more depth, and a little less frenetically."* (2500).

8.5.7. Collaborative planning

On the whole, PPA was not considered to contribute to development of school-wide learning aims; only to their incorporation into planning in a more focused way (1502). School wide initiatives such as Assessment for Learning were in place regardless of PPA.

8.5.8. Learning community

In terms of PPA's contribution to the school as a learning community, there were mixed views. Generally, collaboration around school foci was done *"in staff meetings...as a staff, together"* (2502) and so PPA was said to have little effect. One teacher suggested that PPA facilitated certain activities which required collaboration, such as moderation, or (for the future) work relating to her subject area.

8.5.9. Programme coherence

The strategy of providing one block of time was widely acknowledged by teachers to contribute to sustaining school plans for improvement: *"it really helps for improvement, because it's just a concentrated period."* (2505). The statutory nature of PPA meant it would continue to contribute to sustaining school plans for improvement. Even without release time, teachers would ensure standards did not slip *"because we're professionals and we want the job to be done properly."* (2502). Skills such as professionalism would, therefore, help ensure it was not PPA that contributed to the sustainability of plans.

8.5.10. Resources

PPA was not considered to have a positive effect upon resources in general because of its negative effect on finances. In terms of PPA improving practical resources, as many teachers said it would as said it would not. Reasons for this included a belief that preparation work was a small element of PPA , and the belief that thorough preparation would be done in any case, because *"I wouldn't let the children down or myself down"* (2502).

8.5.11. External support

PPA did not enhance external support for the school in any tangible sense. While it had brought in a specialist, it was not attributed with doing anything else. Staff considered themselves to be part of a *"great community-oriented school anyway"* (2500) where such needs were already addressed.

8.5.12. Processes

PPA was considered to improve processes, particularly target setting and assessment, and planning was also mentioned. Perceptions of extra time meant *"you're thinking more about what you want to achieve [and] how you're going to achieve it"* (2502). In contrast, the headteacher believed the assessment process would be improving anyway because that was a school priority.

8.5.13. Human resources

Most teachers considered PPA to be a motivator. The exception was the one member of staff for whom the only change was financial. She found staff meetings to have more of a motivational effect than did PPA. Two teachers commented that motivation stemmed from a recognition of the importance of their role by those in power.

8.6. Capacity

8.6.1. Does PPA build capacity?

All staff interviewed believed PPA was helping to build the capacity for improvement at this school. They all referred to the extra time and what that meant to them as individuals. For one teacher, the time allowed teachers to see the wider picture and to put those aims and objectives into practice through a focus on the three elements, particularly assessment, and through discussion about PPA, which added value and helped ensure consistency of approach. It helped teachers *"pull together strands of the whole school aims...[by] continually bringing us back together to ensure that we are all progressing in the same direction for school progress"* (2501). Another teacher commented on opportunities for reflection and an ability to *"take on all the new pieces of learning that we're doing a lot quicker"* (2502). A third mentioned not only extra time for teachers to spend on improving assessment, but the added value to children from being taught by a specialist, with *"the variety that brings"* (2505). For the headteacher, the extra time allowed teachers to *"review their planning, analyse those assessment opportunities in more depth and make them more relevant"* (2500) but he saw PPA as sitting within a wider framework of improvement at this school. This framework included staff changes, the school improvement plan, its vision, training, staff meetings, and reviews of assessment data, so that PPA *"is not anywhere near being the sole driver of [improvement]."* (2500). Those things went on *"whether PPA was in place or not."* (2500).

8.6.2. What is capacity building?

One teacher defined the term 'capacity' as indicative of room for improvement. The headteacher talked about capacity in terms of both the *room* and the *potential* to improve. A school with the potential to improve would have a base of resources including:

"staff who would be able and willing to take on board change, to recognise there was a need for change;...a Head, who was supported by governors, who would have a vision for the school;...a leadership team within the school who would be reflective and good at...analysis of data to identify targets for improvement and which areas needed development;...[and] people in the school who would work with you to effect that change, who would understand the wider picture." (2500).

He further talked of individuals' capacities to improve, which contributed to school capacity. For instance, a particular teacher had enormous capacity for improvement because she was *"desperate to learn. She's always reflecting, she goes and visits other settings, she's always challenging herself, she reads, she talks to me, she asks [her colleague] to go in and make observations"* (2500) Two others took this resource led view; one being specific, suggesting schools would need a staff who were *"ready and open and prepared to make changes that are necessary."* (2501) and the other talking about a generic *"potential"* to improve, by which she meant to *"raise the standards to shoot our SATS out of the air."* (2502).

In terms of improvement objectives, the headteacher suggested improvement must be sustainable: *"[capacity for improvement] would signal that the school has got room to continue to develop"* (2500). The notion of maximising existing resources was interpreted from one teacher's statement: even where a school is improving teachers need to *"just push ourselves a bit more to be even better"* (2505).

8.7. Summary

8.7.1. Strategy

Underwood adopted a mixed strategy whose main arrangement, contracting of an Arts specialist, was designed for reasons of quality. Contract extension and cover by the existing part time teacher formed the other elements of the strategy.

8.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

Themes emerging about the perceived *purpose* of the policy were work/life balance and standards. At the beginning of the year, work/life balance was seen as the purpose of the policy, framed by wider concerns of recruitment and retention. Generally, and especially by the end of the first year of implementation, all teachers saw the purpose of the policy as being provision of extra time to ensure continuous and measured learning, with particular reference to assessment activities. At both ends of the year, school outcomes, namely pupil learning and outcomes, were considered most likely.

8.7.3. Time

Assessment was discussed as the most important use of PPA time due to external requirements and internal initiatives and activities.

Two main effects on time arose: reduced working week, and enhanced efficiency, with the latter contributing to the former. Neither of these effects were observed in the case where provision of PPA time was through contract extension, and the headteacher's workload had increased.

8.7.4. Influences

Key findings were as follows:

- Two of the influences (existing relationships, and a positive, open culture) were themselves influenced by the size of the school.
- A number of the influences on PPA's effects were also influenced by the leadership of the school (as shown in Table 8-8) in the sense that leadership had a large part to play in the establishment of assessment as a major priority and the development of a vision for PPA time and its ideal use. Leadership affected school priorities, which were seen as 'enabling' because they provided strong direction for the best use of PPA time.
- The policy itself had more than one element which appeared to constrain its benefits (these were funding, and the non-directive role of the headteacher, as shown in Table 8-8).

8.7.5. ***Effects***

The summary table below shows the effects PPA was seen to have, or not to have, at this school according to interview evidence; and the sorts of influences impacting upon whether or not they were associated with PPA. Ticks represent an influence that had a positive impact upon a particular effect. Crosses represent an influence that had a negative bearing on an effect. The most pertinent points were that:

- PPA time had a clear positive effect on developing staff, processes, and human resources, the first two of which were considered important for improvement here.
- It was not generally perceived to positively effect involvement, collaborative planning, programme coherence, resources, leadership, co-ordination, reflection, learning community, or external support at this school; the first four of which were considered important for improvement here.
- The three effects associated with PPA (processes, human resources, and developing staff) were all influenced by aspects of the policy itself.
- Four of the effects not associated with PPA (collaborative planning, reflection, learning community, and human resources) were negatively influenced by structural influences.

		Influence	Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor	Effects of PPA: Associated with PPA: Developing staff	Processes	Human resources	Not associated with PPA: Programme coherence	Leadership	Co-ordination	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Involvement	Resources	External support
External		Political action/tone	✓						✓								
		Inherent policy details		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				×	
School		Culture	✓		✓						×						×
		History		✓	✓	✓	×				×				×		
		Mix of pupils	✓														
		Leadership		✓													
		Structures		✓	✓			×	✓		×	×	×	× ✓			
		Support staff	✓		✓												
		Relationships		✓													
		Skills		✓		✓			×							×	
Teacher		Role (experience)								✓ ×				✓			
		Use of time		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓ ×				×	

Table 8-9 Summary of links between 'influences' and 'effects'

8.7.6. Capacity building

PPA was seen to assist in the process of building capacity for improvement through all the consequences that extra time brought, particularly the opportunity to keep work in line with school aims and objectives, to reflect individually and as a group, and to assess. This took place within a much wider framework at this school. 'Capacity for improvement' was broadly associated with the possession of certain abilities and resources with the school and its teachers.

9. Analysis School 6 – Westfields First School

9.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from Westfields First School. This case follows the same layout as previous cases, with a summary of key findings to conclude the chapter. A summary of key findings concludes the chapter.

9.1.1. School pupil context

	Total number of pupils on roll	Pupils eligible for KS2 tests	Total number and percentage of pupils with SEN				Average Key Stage 1 Point Score
			with statements		without statements		
			Number	%	Number	%	
LA Average				5.30		15.40	
England Average				3.30		15.40	15.6
Westfields First	284	0	2	1.00	32	11.00	17.0

	% half days missed due to	
	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
LA Average	5.6	0.2
England Average	5.1	0.4
Westfields First	4.7	0.3

Table 9-1 Attainment table, Westfields First. Source: (OfSTED, 2006a, OfSTED, 2004d, DfES, 2004a)

OfSTED last inspected Westfields, a First School, in 2004; a year prior to the commencement of this research. Information was taken from that year's OfSTED report (2004d), as well as OfSTED's 2004 attainment tables, and the Panda Report of another First school that showed national figures. Pupils came from a very mixed range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The latest OfSTED report described aspects of this school as *"good"* on many occasions. Children achieved and attained well, behaved well, learned and were taught well. The headteacher described Westfields as *"an Eco-school"* (1600) because of the volume of initiatives that took place in this area, including recycling, an Eco-committee, and weekend working parties. His emphasis was on achieving *"a broad and balanced curriculum"* including a lot of Arts provision, and making sure *"the children are fit and healthy to learn"* (1600).

9.1.2. School conditions

The School Conditions Survey (section 3.5.3.4) yielded a 43% rate of return (n=27), with a good proportion of responses being obtained from each stakeholder group, with the exception of support staff as shown in Table 3-9. The chart below demonstrates that, with the exception of 'involvement', average scores for the other five conditions fell between 'often' and 'nearly always'. It can be also be seen that senior managers tended to rate school conditions more highly than other stakeholder groups.

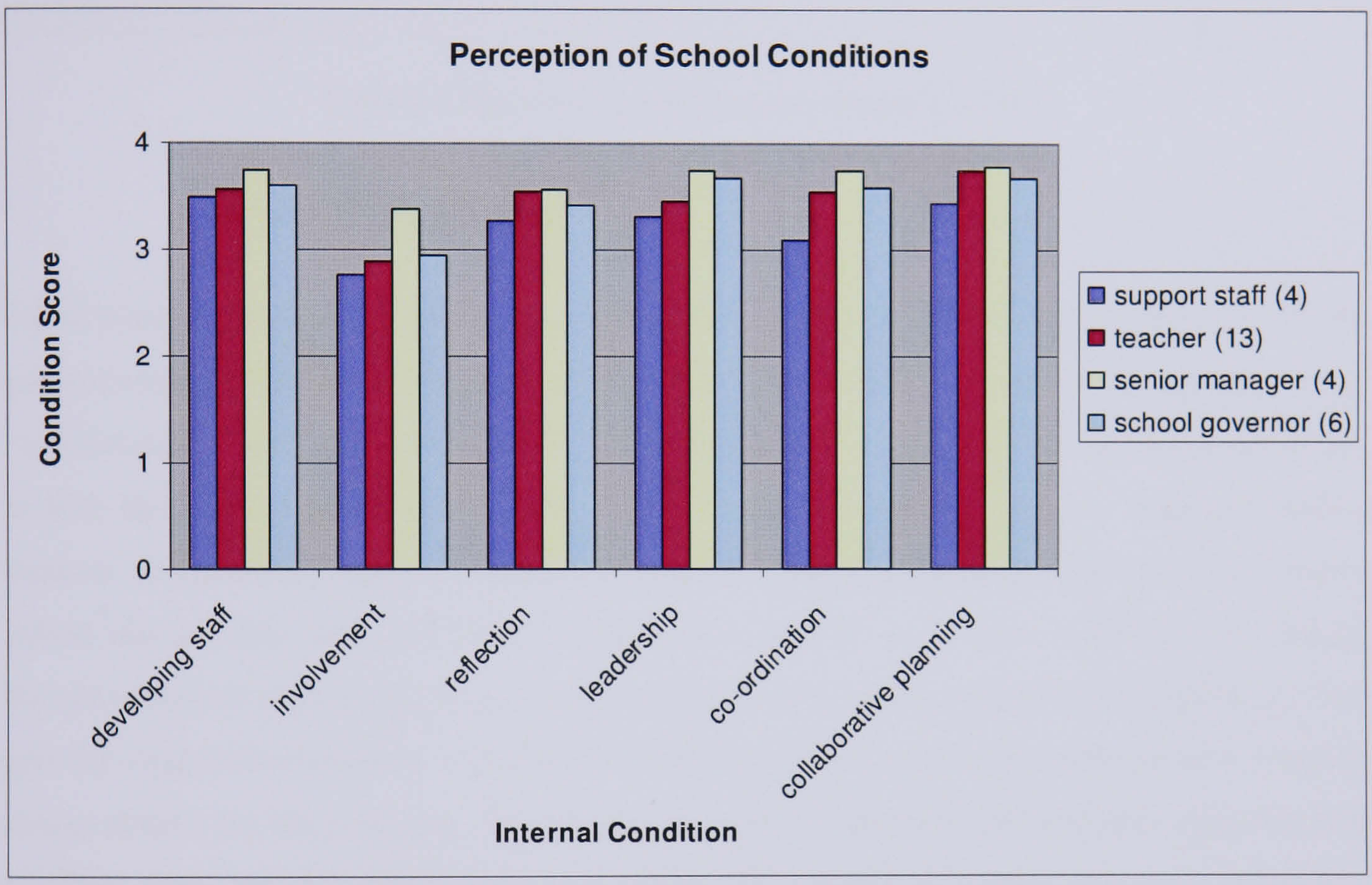

Figure 9-1 Chart showing stakeholder perceptions of Westfields' internal conditions

9.1.3. Interviewees

With the exception of the headteacher, who was interviewed twice but not observed, the following staff (from a potential pool of thirteen teachers) were interviewed twice and observed:

Name	Role	Gender	Contract
James (1600 / 2600)	Headteacher	Male	Full time
Catherine (1601 / 2601)	Year R Teacher / Senior Management Team / Key Stage Co-ordinator / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time

Eleanor (1602 / 2602)	Year 3 Teacher / Senior Management Team / SENCO / Key Stage Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Louise (1603 / 2603)	Year 2 Teacher / Deputy Head / Senior Management Team / Key Stage Co-ordinator / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Carol (1604 / 2604)	Year 3 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time
Ruth (1605 / 2605)	Year 1 Teacher / Subject Co-ordinator	Female	Full time

Table 9-2 Interview participants at Westfields First.

9.1.4. PPA strategy

Initial planning for the provision of cover for PPA at this school was very complex, with the initial consideration being *"how much money I'd got."* (1600), and the whole process being *"evolutionary"*, and affected by a lack of willingness of existing Teaching Assistants (TAs) to take up Grade 4 positions for PPA. PPA was to be sustained into the future through a mixture of TA cover, one part time teacher, and it was anticipated that the new headteacher would also provide cover for a while. Timetables were set so the person taking cover taught the same subject each week. Teachers had a choice over which subject they would hand over and the logic behind choices included not wishing to hand over a specialist subject, keeping things simple for the person in the classroom, reducing planning for teachers, and ensuring teachers were present where class observation for reasons of assessment was necessary. Although *"it's not the spirit of the [National] Agreement [on workforce reform]"* (1600) the headteacher believed that *"initially the majority of teachers are going to be planning for the HLTAs."* for reasons of continuity and progression in the classroom.

9.2. Perceived Purpose and Outcomes

This section examines the themes emerging about the *purpose* and the *outcomes* of PPA time. In terms of purpose, PPA was seen first and foremost in terms of improving 'work/life balance', although improvements in working practices were also mentioned. In terms of outcomes these were teacher outcomes: 'teachers' capacities for things'; other outcomes, particularly work/life balance; and school outcomes: 'school's capacity to do something'.

9.2.1. Perceived purpose of PPA time

9.2.1.1. Work/life balance

Teachers here were all in agreement that the purpose of this policy was to lessen the burden on teachers in terms of the work that they take home on evenings and weekends. A comment by the headteacher was indicative of how government were under pressure from teacher associations to improve the burden on teachers for the purposes of recruitment and retention, although he himself did not perceive this to be a genuine concern: *"certain deprived areas might have issues appointing staff. But I don't think that affects the majority of people...It's certainly never affected us."* (1600).

9.2.1.2. Work/life balance leading to improved classroom practice

Teachers did not associate the purpose of the policy with raised academic standards. One comment by the headteacher implied a potential link between enhanced work-life balance and better teaching, albeit weakly: *"[it's] to take the work-load and the pressure off people, so they can – I don't know – deliver what they're going to deliver during lesson times more effectively and be fitter, if you like, to do it – less tired to do it."* (1600).

9.2.1.3. Improved classroom practice

Despite not considering the purpose of PPA to raise standards at all, teachers made a number of comments suggesting some links between the time spent in formal PPA and the performance of teachers in terms of effectiveness of those activities carried out during that time. These were countered by a few comments suggestive of the potentially detrimental effect PPA time may have upon standards. For example one teacher suggested benefits such as better planning may be outweighed if cover is unsuitable and teachers are *"spending most of their time worrying about what's going on in the classroom"* (1602). On a positive note, two teachers commented on the potential benefits of spending that structured time away from distractions and with a colleague, including assisting with IT issues. Potential improvements in standards were attributed to extra time spent on PPA activities. One teacher suggested this should affect pupils' learning, which was assumed to be related to standards. Time freed up by PPA could also be used after school to improve things like research and preparation. In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of purpose
Round 1	To improve work / life balance.
Round 2	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. Also to improve working.

Table 9-3 Summary of perceptions of outcome over the year

9.2.2. Perceived outcomes of PPA time

9.2.2.1. School's capacity to do something

School outcomes, particularly 'pupil learning and outcomes' were considered possible at the beginning of the year and reasons given included HLTAs having something to offer, as well as collaboration between teachers, and teachers *"putting much more in [which] should affect pupil learning."* (1601). The headteacher was sceptical about school-level outcomes *"unless there's funding."* (1600). At the end of the year, most teachers considered school-level outcomes unlikely to arise from PPA.

9.2.2.2. Teachers' capacities for things

At the beginning of the year, the most common choice for most likely outcome was individual teacher outcomes, with teachers suggesting reflection, flexibility, learning, and co-operation. Concurring with this view, the headteacher saw this arising because *"each teacher is going to have a line manager's role, almost, for part of the week"* (1600). By the end of the year, most teachers were voicing the opinion that teacher outcomes were unlikely, and that the only outcome would be improved work/life balance.

9.2.2.3. Other outcomes

By the end of the year, improved work/life balance replaced teacher outcomes as the most likely outcome of PPA time. In summary:

Interview round	Perceptions of outcome
Round 1	Primarily 'teacher' then 'other' then 'school'.
Round 2	Mostly 'other'. 'Teacher' and 'school' outcomes considered unlikely.

Table 9-4 Summary of perceptions of outcome

9.3. Time

As for the preceding cases, this section examines the emergent theme 'time'. Interviews and diaries provide the source of information here, and Table 3-10 shows the number of diaries kept. Breakdown of time spend is shown in Figure 9-2.

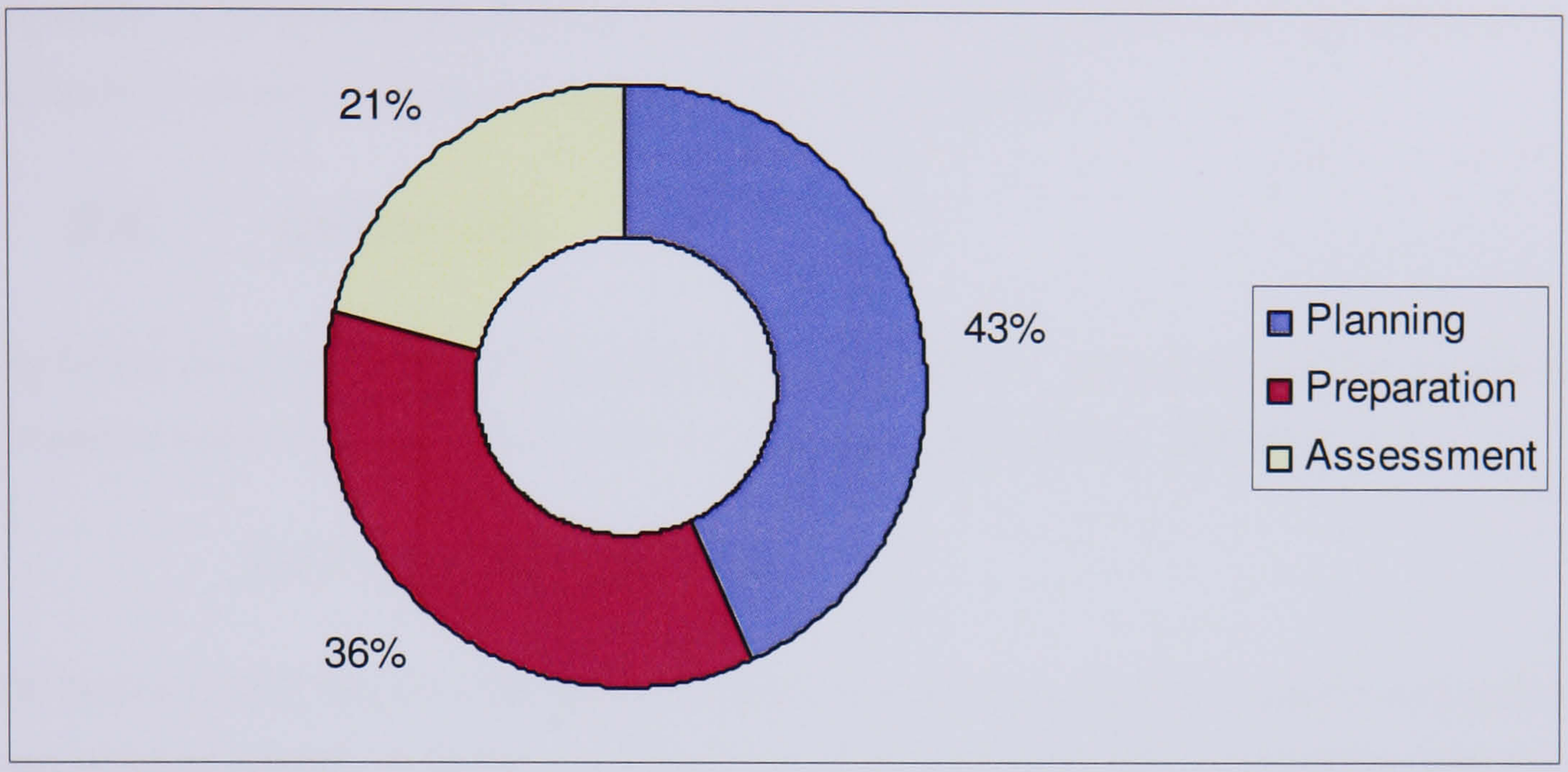

Figure 9-2 Analysis of term 1 diary studies at Westfields

9.3.1. Influences on how time is spent

Teachers worked in year group pairs during PPA, which meant that planning, or a combination of planning and another activity, were the favoured uses of PPA time *"to make sure that we are liaising with our partner...covering the same sort of areas."* (2605). In terms of making resources, the headteacher suggested this was less so because *"they're well enough organised to get their TAs to do a lot of it."* (2600). Diaries showed that assessment and its related activities were less common uses of PPA time at the beginning of the year because while formative assessment was ongoing in class, more formal assessments took place on a half termly basis, and marking was seen as a job for at home. Later in the year teachers agreed that *"we are focusing very heavily on assessment at the moment."* (2603).

9.3.2. The effect of having extra time

With the exception of the headteacher, for whom the organisation of PPA had been an additional workload, all teachers and talked of a reduced working week: *"the only difference it's made is that we don't have to spend one night a week doing our planning, preparation, and assessment. We do it in school time."* (2602). Further, enhanced efficiency was

attributed to the timing of PPA during the school day, which reduced distractions and interruptions. Limited time acted as a motivating deadline for teachers who *"know we have that time to do it...and we get that job done then in that time."* (2604).

While teachers readily pointed out that they were no less thorough prior to PPA, it seemed that for certain parts of their job, extra time allowed them to reflect more. On the whole, however, *"a lot of these effects [you're asking us about], time doesn't make any difference to because we do the job properly, however long it takes."* (1602).

9.4. Influences

As for the three preceding studies, influences on provision of, and effects of, PPA time were examined under three categories: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher' influences.

9.4.1. External influences

Of Stoll's (1999) five external influences, two bore significance here (broader community and political action). A further emergent finding was that the policy itself bore influence. The following series of analytical statements explore each of the influences at Westfields:

Influence	Findings
Broader community	Relationships with the community, particularly through other schools, provided a potential source of PPA cover. Although accommodation within the school prevented the headteacher from taking up one particular offer of assistance in P.E., this factor had potential to serve as a 'qualifier', should willing cover provision not be found internally, or even an 'enabler', should this external source of cover provision turn out to be particularly beneficial to children's learning.
Political action and tone	The headteacher, as well as another teacher, suggested the policy would continue provided the political will was present. In the sense that this had brought about and sustained the policy thus far, it was an 'enabler' but had potential to become an 'inhibitor' should this change.
Inherent policy details	The notion of finances as an 'inhibitor' on PPA's positive effects arose on more than one occasion. The headteacher considered that there should be *"earmarked funding."* (1600) for PPA. The notion that extra time was provided in the working day, 'enabled' teachers to have some focused time, thereby improving processes such as planning.

Table 9-5 External influences at Westfields

9.4.2. ***School influences***

All of Stoll's (1999) nine school influences bore influence at Westfields but there were no emergent findings at school-level. The following series of analytical statements explore each of the influences at Westfields.

Influence	Findings
History	The most notable historical factor affecting implementation and benefits of PPA was its financial status. Lack of funding for PPA were commented upon on numerous occasions and was an 'inhibitor'. The headteacher suggested that the previous positive OfSTED report and SEF had coloured the way in which he perceived the school and the light in which he viewed PPA's contribution. Similarly, in terms of PPA's effects, teachers suggested that a good many of those were in place in the school anyway. For example, teachers already worked with colleagues and so *"there always has been great co-operation between us."* (1603). This 'inhibited' the extent to which he perceived certain effects arising from PPA time. The size of the school, with two classes per year group, meant that a collaborative PPA strategy was possible. Size was thus an 'enabler'.
Culture	In the sense that certain things were happening already, for example: involvement of parents and sharing of ideas, the existing culture was positive and PPA did not bring about further positive change. In a very literal sense PPA was 'inhibited' by the positive culture. Culture here was also expressed by an attitude of provisional trust for new initiatives*: "a culture of "we'll do it if we think it's going to benefit the school. if it doesn't work we'll do an evaluation, we'll change it, and we'll do it in a different way" ."* (1600) rather than a more dynamic *"culture of change; which is what you need"* (1600). In this sense, culture did not 'enable' PPA's benefits, but nor did it stifle them. On the whole, this factor could be labelled a 'qualifier'.
Mix of pupils	There were very few behavioural problems at the school, and nothing that the headteacher did not consider HLTAs to be able to manage. Pupil behaviour was, therefore, a 'qualifier'.
Leadership	Leadership was a current issue at this school because of the forthcoming retirement of the headteacher. In terms of the future effects of PPA, teachers considered organisation had been good thus far; a 'qualifier', demonstrating uncertainty only over the sustainability of PPA, which

	related to the plans of the new headteacher. Discussing his preferred means of implementation, the headteacher talked of the potential merits of closing the school for a morning or afternoon and allowing teachers to work in key stage teams. This plan had benefits, but also drawbacks, particularly in terms of opportunity for assessment. Regardless of the likelihood of these plans coming to pass, it could be argued that they reflected the current headteacher's views and beliefs, and the messages he passed to his staff. Plans of the new headteacher, as well as the current one, therefore, had potential to be 'inhibitors' or 'qualifiers'.
Structures	The headteacher considered structures *"in terms of curriculum; of syllabus; of classes; of sets in Maths, for example"* (1600) would support the HLTA or teacher providing cover. As another structural factor, PPA arrangements facilitating collaborative working were also considered beneficial for a number of reasons to be examined in the section on 'effects', and therefore could be considered an 'enabler'. The building itself was an 'inhibitor' in that there was insufficient space for certain PPA activities to occur that the headteacher had hoped for.
Teacher relationships	The body of staff at Westfields was well established and in terms of relationships, *"those networks were in place before PPA."* (2603). In the sense that teaching staff were required to work together during PPA, and relationships between them were not said to be problematic, this factor was a 'qualifier'.
Morale	Staff morale was said to be high, particularly so because of a recent positive OfSTED report, and the headteacher did not consider this factor an issue. Staff also pointed out that they were *"hardworking"* (2603) and *"dedicated"* (2602), which suggested that high levels of morale could only act as a 'qualifier'.
Support staff	Finding willing and suitably qualified support staff to provide cover was problematic. Further, their absence in a support capacity created a gap which was not usually difficult to fill but was, nevertheless, a problem arising from the particular strategy used. In terms of the quality of cover provided, four of five teachers, while generally admitting problems were not universal, mentioned their own, or others' dissatisfaction with the cover provision, which would, in this sense, be described as an 'inhibitor'. One of these conceded *"it very much depends on who is in the room. I think it's the person's skills that's the main thing."* (2602). Nevertheless, because options were limited and support staff provided a solution of sorts, they were 'qualifiers'. Further, TAs had strengths that were utilised

	in some cases and the headteacher saw development of support staff as being something that would contribute to the sustainability of PPA. In this sense, TAs could be described also as 'enablers'.
Power issues	The headteacher had avoided giving the cover job to certain people because of likely *"power base"* issues (1600) that would arise. In a very minor way this had 'inhibited' his choices, but in the sense that the majority of staff would not bring the same issues to the job, their lack of power issues was a 'qualifier'.

Table 9-6 School influences at Westfields

9.4.3. ***Teacher influences***

Of Stoll's eight teacher influences, three were seen as influential here (experiences, well-being, and motivation), and there was one emergent finding: 'use of PPA time'.

Influence	**Findings**
Emotional well-being	The headteacher wanted to encourage teachers to use their new found leisure time in a positive way, ensuring they benefited most from it, suggesting that the emotional well-being of staff was an important 'qualifier' without which *"we wouldn't be able to implement [PPA] at all."* (1600).
Motivation to learn	The nature of staff as being *"so keen, well motivated [to] give 100% to the school."* (2600) led the headteacher to relate PPA to a number of positive effects, making this an 'enabling' influence. In summary, teacher influences were few, but positive.
Life and career experiences (role)	Teachers with more career experience were able to provide input to newer teachers when paired together, 'enabling' positive benefits of PPA.
Use of time	Use of time was attributed to the positive effects co-ordination (through collaboration with others), reflection (through assessment - teachers were able to spend time comparing achievements across classes and scrutinising assessment results), learning community (through reflection), programme coherence (through specific subject planning, and collaboration), and processes (through specific subject planning).

Table 9-7 Teacher influences at Westfields

The following table gives an overall summary of influences on PPA's effects at Westfields. As can be seen from the 'affected by' column, the recent positive OfSTED report coloured

perceptions, and the size of the school was a factor in enabling PPA to be allocated to pairs of teachers. In summary, external and teacher influences were mostly enablers, while school influences were predominantly a mixture of inhibitors and enablers.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES		Affected by	Q	E	I
Community					
	Source of cover		(✓)	(✓)	
Political action/tone					
	Political will / legislation			✓	(✓)
Inherent policy details					
	In the working day			✓	
	Extra time			✓	
	Funding				✓
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
Culture					
	Positive				(✓)
	Provisional trust		✓		
History					
	Size			✓	
	Improvement				✓
	Finances				✓
Mix of pupils					
	Positive attitudes / behaviour		✓		
Leadership					
	Efficient organisation		✓		
	Communication of vision		(✓)		(✓)
	Change in leadership		(✓)		(✓)
Structures					
	Accommodation				✓
	PPA strategy (collaboration)	Size		✓	
	School organisation			✓	
Power issues			✓		(✓)
Morale		History (OfSTED)	✓		
Relationships			✓		
Support staff					
	Skills				✓
	Provided a solution		✓		
	Sustainable			✓	
	Lack of willingness				✓
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Emotional well-being			✓		
Motivation				✓	
Experience (role)					
	Mentoring			✓	
Use of PPA time					
	Collaborating with others / TAs			✓	
	Specific subject planning			✓	
	Assessment			✓	
	Reflection			✓	
	Contacting outsiders			✓	✓

Table 9-8 Summary of influences on PPA's implementation at Westfields

9.5. Effects

9.5.1. General trends

As in the two preceding studies, a visual representation of perceived effects is shown in the following two charts (Figure 9-3 and Figure 9-4). The two charts are very similar in shape, demonstrating that in general, if PPA was perceived to give rise to a certain effect, teachers in this school had no reason to suggest that this would not continue into the future. Further, where answers changed between 'now' and 'future', in most cases these reflect more positive answers in the future. In this school, teachers generally considered practice would enhance their use of PPA time. From left to right along the charts: PPA time had a clear positive effect on co-ordination, processes, and human resources. It was not generally perceived to positively affect developing staff, involvement, leadership, reflection, collaborative planning (in a school-wide sense), learning community, resources, external support, or programme coherence, although the negative outcome for the latter was only marginal.

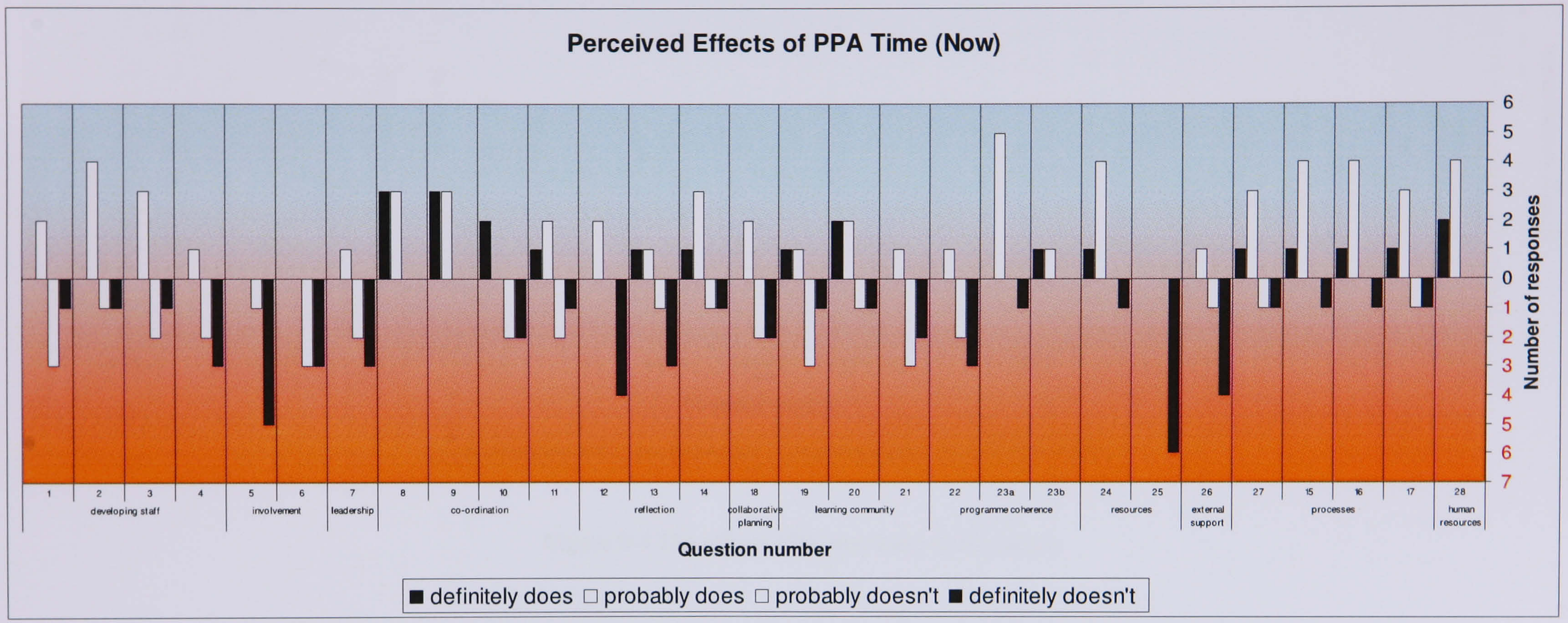

Figure 9-3 The effects PPA is perceived to have now.

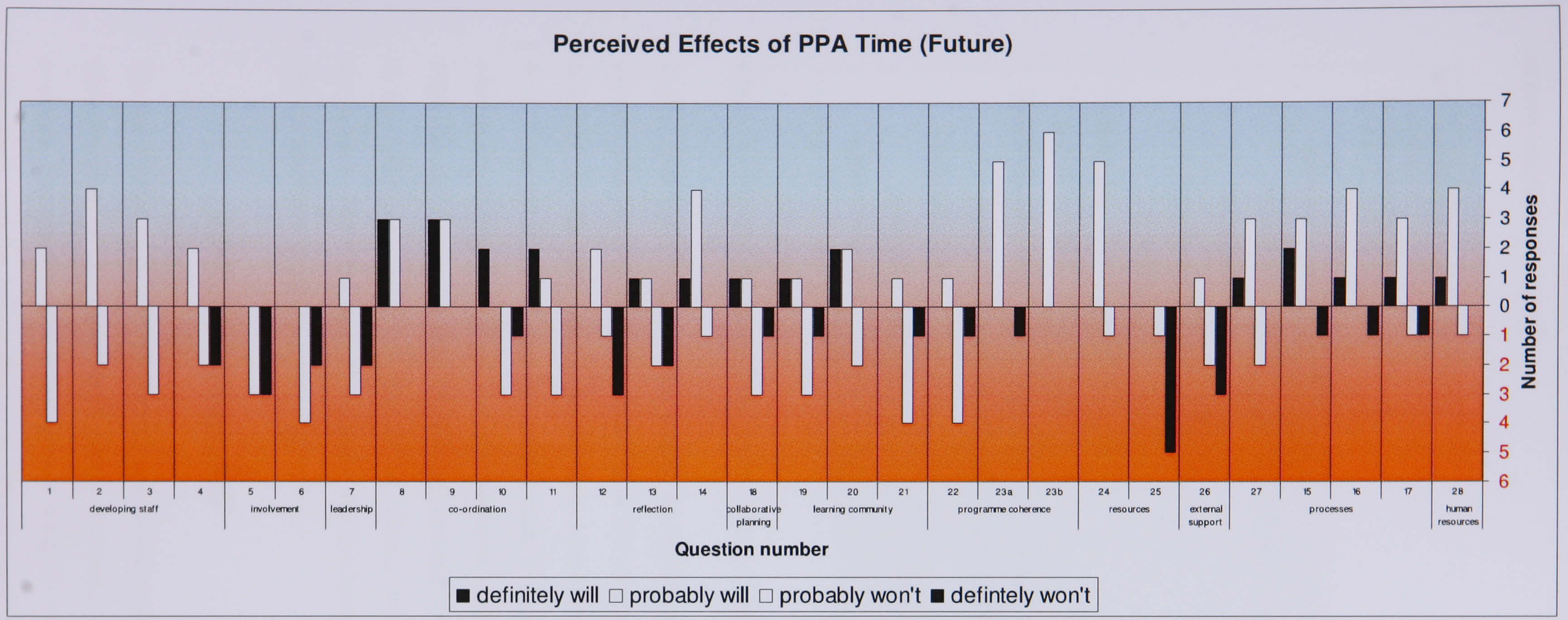

Figure 9-4 The effects PPA may have in the future

The chart below (Figure 9-5) indicates which effects were perceived to be important for improvement at this school.

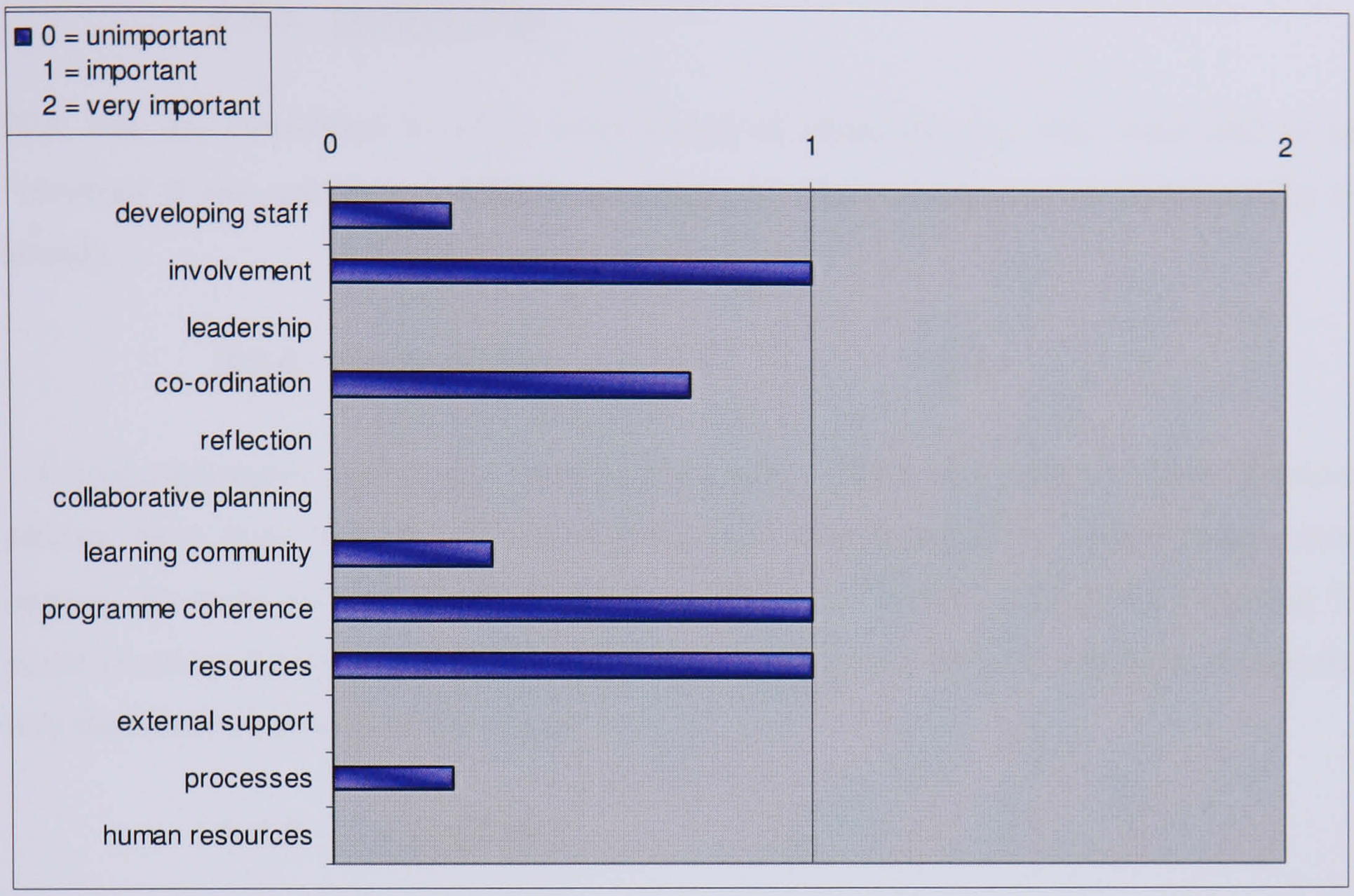

Figure 9-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement

In line with the findings of the school conditions survey (Figure 9-1), which found all six areas it examined to be highly rated with the exception of 'involvement', Figure 9-5 shows that this was the only one of the six areas considered to be important (score ≥ 1 on Figure 9-5). Comparison of Figure 9-5 with Figure 9-3 and Figure 9-4 indicates that there were effects considered important for improvement (programme coherence, and resources) that PPA did not address. Indeed, of the small number of effects PPA was considered to give rise to (co-ordination, processes, human resources), none were effects considered important to the school. The following 12 sections explain how PPA was perceived to bring about the effects shown in Figure 9-3 and Figure 9-4.

9.5.2. Developing staff

On the whole, PPA was not considered to enhance teaching skills because these improved through other professional development activities, such as courses or observation of other teachers. Exceptions were where newer teachers were mentored by their more experienced colleagues, and the notion that extra time allowed reflection on these matters, or discussion of issues. Similarly although extra time enhanced opportunities for assessment, it did not

improve teachers' skills in this area. Expectations of children were not enhanced because teachers considered these to be high in any case.

9.5.3. Involvement

PPA was not considered to affect involvement of either parents, who were said to be *"involved if you ask them."* (2605); or pupils, to whom teachers gave responsibility in already.

9.5.4. Leadership

"School philosophy and senior management style" (2600) was said to affect decision-making more than PPA did. Teachers considered themselves to be *"fairly independent anyway. We make our own decisions to a certain degree."* (1604). Only in the sense that *"it might speed up decisions...[or] raise questions."* (1605) was PPA considered to change the way decisions were made in the school.

9.5.5. Co-ordination

Extra time *"to think things through"* (2604), and the fact that *"we have our PPA time together"* (2602) meant that teachers could co-ordinate better with colleagues during a set time. Having achieved a certain amount during the school day, extra time could then be given over to leadership roles..

9.5.6. Reflection

Recognition of others' strengths was not something PPA was generally said to promote because *"it's a very established staff and those networks were in place before PPA."* (2603) On the other hand, some suggested they had learned more about the TAs' abilities through the process. PPA was not widely seen to benefit the school's improvement agenda, which was observed through other school structures, particularly policies and meetings. School-wide improvement tended not to be something teachers focused on in PPA time: *"I don't give the school improvement a lot of thought to be honest!"* (2605), but PPA did allow some time for comparison of achievements across classes and for scrutinising assessment results.

9.5.7. Collaborative planning

Besides the headteacher, who thought that benefits of collaboration would filter through to the whole school level as *"Whatever comes from a "pair" meeting will come to the staff*

meeting, and may even reach the governors or management curriculum committees." (2600), teachers did not generally credit PPA with an improvement in school-wide aims for pupil learning. They associated this more with wider school activities such as staff meetings.

9.5.8. Learning community

PPA did not allow staff to collaborate on a wider level than with their year group partner. This sort of collaboration happened in *"meetings with the whole staff to compare standards...to make sure we are all speaking the same language"* (2506). Teachers did credit PPA with enhancing their ability to reflect, whether through giving them more time, more time with a colleague, or more time within the school day. They did not consider it to improve the opportunities they had for influencing activities and policies, partly because they had always had these opportunities, and partly because policy reviews were facilitated through other activities, such as teacher observation.

9.5.9. Programme coherence

There were varying responses about whether PPA had an effect on the creation of a link between pupil learning, staff learning, and wider school goals. In terms of helping to sustain plans for school improvement, the elements of PPA credited with this were the collaboration, which might encourage teachers to take issues further into staff meetings, and the provision of extra time in which teachers could *"put the nitty gritty [details] into your planning"* (2605). In terms of its own sustainability, all staff interviewed believed it would be sustainable, because *"it's been organised fairly well really"* (2504), although there was the *"unknown quantity"* (2602) of the new headteacher, and of government decisions, and most people mentioned financial problems, including the head who said sustainability was dependent upon government funding (2600).

9.5.10. Resources

Time, albeit limited, was said by some teachers to improve the resources they prepared although *"as a rule we do try to make nice resources for children [anyway]."* (2601). Financial resources were another matter, however, and nobody considered these would be positively influenced by PPA because *"Unless somebody gives you all the money for your PPA, it's going to cost"* (2604).

9.5.11. External support

Unlike the headteacher, who considered the extra time may give teachers *"the opportunity to think who they might invite, and why."* (2600), teachers did not consider PPA to improve the school's use of external people because they did not look beyond the immediate provision of cover.

9.5.12. Processes

On the whole, PPA was given credit for improvements in terms of processes such as target setting, putting planning into action in the classroom, and assessing results. It was said to improve these processes by giving extra time to allow more differentiation, by allowing collaboration in an environment where pressure was reduced, and by facilitating sharing of ideas. Collaboration was influenced by size of the school.

9.5.13. Human resources

Teachers were fairly positive that PPA motivated them. It was said to do this by providing focused time in which work could be done in order to free up time at the weekend. For the future, however, it may be that *"the novelty will have worn off"* (2600) and it will become less of a motivator.

9.6. Capacity

9.6.1. Does PPA build capacity?

Teachers were, on the whole, uncertain about PPA's contribution to capacity at this school. Two teachers were positive only in terms of its relation to reduced stress or tiredness and for one of these there was the issue of weighing those benefits up against the negatives, including the *"nightmare [of] trying to set it up"*, the notion that *"We're very possessive of our classes and there's a limit to how much you want to leave your children with other people."* as well as the issues some had about *"what's going on in some classes"* (2602). The headteacher and two others were more explicit about its benefits, although these must be considered against the negatives mentioned. On an individual level, planning was done during the school day, enhancing morale *"because we don't feel so weighed down"* (2604). That time allowed teachers to be more focused and prepared, to know that *"when you're in the classroom you are teaching to the best of your ability"* (2604). The headteacher expressed the view that the key to improvement was the team working element: improvement would come through ideas generated within the group working environment.

Small group reflection and consolidation of ideas could strengthen confidence of individuals, pairs, or groups, to the point where ideas were shared more freely with the rest of the school through staff, SMT, or governor meetings.

9.6.2. ***What is capacity building?***

Teachers considered the notion of capacity building to reflect one of two things. For some, it related to the presence of a 'gap' in provision, where *"There's always something needs to be done."* (2600), which the headteacher suggested was the case in all schools. He proposed that there were limits to a school's capacity for improvement in practice, however, because continual improvement through taking on of new initiatives eventually came at the price of a loss of initiative sustainability. A school must aim for this cut-off point, but must then avoid becoming *"what they called "coasting" schools some years back."* (2600). In discussing the means by which his school had avoided this situation in recent years, he talked of the importance of sustaining improvement through practice-sharing networks with other schools. Besides these networks, he also talked of several 'resources' necessary for sustainability of initiatives, including *"the staff, the leadership of the school, the children, and the support you get from parents."*.

In line with this resource-based definition of capacity, another teacher suggested a school with capacity to improve was one with an *awareness* of those improvement 'gaps', and therefore the means to begin closing that gap. For this teacher, collaborative assessment and discussion would be one means of highlighting gaps. Similarly, another teacher talked of the mental capacity required to deal with problems, suggesting that PPA could contribute to this by reducing stress and fatigue.

An important criteria for improvement was that it must be sustainable. The headteacher was concerned about sustainability of plans for improvement: *"the way we organise the school development plan...each group [of subjects] becomes a focus every three years...And that sustains it...But I think there's a limit to how much improvement you can make overall...you have to ask how sustainable it is if you take too much on."* (2600). Two other teachers' comments hinted at the importance of continual improvement also: *"You've got to keep moving the school forward, that is important."* (2603); and *"we are continually striving to improve our provision for the children."* (2605).

9.7. Summary

9.7.1. Strategy

Planning implementation of PPA time was problematic at Westfields because there was no straightforward solution. Westfields adopted a mixed strategy using HLTAs, and part time supply teachers.

9.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

Themes emerging about the perceived *purpose* of the policy were work/life balance, and improvements in working practices, although this did not tend to be related to improved academic standards. In terms of outcomes, 'teacher' outcomes were considered likely at the beginning of the year. Later on, however, work/life balance replaced these as the most likely outcome of PPA time.

9.7.3. Time

Factors influencing use of time were the collaborative working arrangements, which to some extent favoured planning; whether TAs could be utilised to do certain work; and the time of year.

Two main effects of extra time arose: enhanced efficiency, brought about by the timing of PPA during the school day; and reduced working week. Time was seen to enhance certain aspects of working, but to bear no influence on those that teachers carried out no more or less thoroughly as a result of that time.

9.7.4. Influences

Key findings were as follows, and relate to Table 9-8:

- Many of the influences on implementation and effects of PPA were of mixed impact (qualifier, enabler, inhibitor). In some cases this related to the potential of a certain influence to be either negative or positive in the future; for example, leadership was not explicated as a significant influence on PPA, but a change in leadership could tip the balance either way. Uncertainty related to the evolutionary nature of PPA at this school, and an impending change of leadership.
- In terms of interlinking of influences, historical influences such as size, and the recent positive OfSTED, were the major factors that influenced other 'influences'.

9.7.5. ***Effects***

The summary table below shows the effects PPA was seen to have, or not to have, at this school according to interview evidence; and the sorts of influences impacting upon whether or not they were associated with PPA. Ticks represent an influence that had a positive impact upon a particular effect. Crosses represent an influence that had a negative bearing on an effect. The most pertinent points are that:

- PPA time had a clear positive effect on co-ordination, processes, and human resources.
- It was not generally perceived to positively affect developing staff, involvement, leadership, reflection, collaborative planning (in a school-wide sense), learning community, programme coherence, resources, or external support.
- The three effects associated with PPA were all influenced by aspects of the policy itself
- Structural influences affected two of the three effects associated with PPA.
- Structural, historical, and pupil-related influences bore negative impact upon some of those effects not associated with PPA.

		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor	Developing staff	Involvement	Leadership	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Programme coherence	Resources	External support	Co-ordination	Processes	Human resources
					Effects of PPA											
					Not associated with PPA									Associated with PPA		
External	Community	(✓)	(✓)													
	Inherent policy			✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Political action		✓	(✓)							✓ ✗					
School	Culture	✓		(✓)												
	History		✓	✓				✗			✗			✓		
	Mix of pupils	✓			✗	✗										
	Leadership	(✓)	✓	(✓)							✗ ✓					
	Structures		✓	✓	✓ ✗			✓ ✗	✓ ✗		✗	✓		✓	✓	
	Relationships	✓						✗								
	Morale	✓														
	Support staff	✓	✓	✓												
	Power issues	✓		(✓)												
Teacher	Role		✓				✗									
	Emotional well-being	✓														
	Motivation to learn		✓													
	Use of time	✓		(✓)				✓		✓	✓		✓ ✗		✓	

Table 9-9 Summary of links between 'influences' and 'effects'

9.7.6. Capacity

PPA was considered to build capacity, although not all teachers were equally convinced. While improvements in stress, morale, and teaching were mentioned, the headteacher believed the key to improvement was the team working element of PPA because of its facilitation of idea generation and dissemination. 'Capacity for improvement' was associated with both the need to improve, and having the resources to improve, namely the networks, and people with the mental capacity, awareness, and skills to generate and sustain this

improvement. PPA was seen to build capacity particularly because of its facilitation of team working within the school, and extra time it provided, particularly to reduce the burden on teachers.

10. Cross Case Analysis

This chapter focuses on a comparative analysis of the themes from the preceding six case studies. Its purpose is to develop understanding and explanation across a number of cases, through understanding how processes and outcomes are qualified by local conditions. It is, therefore, not the intention of this chapter to reduce findings to a series of simplistic generalisations. The method by which this is carried out involves section by section comparison of findings, making particular use of the summary sections within each case study.

10.1. PPA strategies implemented

A range of strategies, and number of strategies adopted, was observed. Four of the schools adopted mixed strategies comprising two or more solutions to the problem. Mixed strategies were adopted for a number of reasons, including the evolutionary nature of PPA planning in one school; a lack of school-wide skill or willingness that would make a particular approach universal; to keep teachers happy by providing the 'best' solution in at least some classes; a lack of funding, which limited options. Headteachers typically demonstrated strong feeling about particular strategies they did *not* adopt, and championed the benefits of their chosen approach.

School	Strategy					
	Specialist Teacher	HLTA	Existing Teacher	Contract Extension	Teaching Assistant	Supply Teacher
Barfields	✓			✓		
Hall Gardens			✓		✓	
Meadows		✓				
The Orchard	✓	✓	✓			
Underwood	✓		✓	✓		
Westfields		✓				✓

Table 10-1 Summary of strategies adopted

Specialists were recruited for a number of reasons including ease of recruitment; ability to plan their own work, further reducing teachers' workloads; preference of the governing body; reasons of 'quality', 'standards', knowledge and skills; for flexibility; for consistency;

to develop that area in school more generally; to cover lots of part time classes; and to make use of an existing relationship with a specialist, who could provide further cover when necessary. Three heads indicated that this would be the strategy of choice if finances did not present a barrier. Reasons for not adopting this approach also included class teachers wanting to maintain control for all subjects; difficulties in organising it; and children who would not cope with the change.

The **HLTA** route was chosen for a number of reasons, including the availability of suitable HLTAs in school and agreement from the governing body; the benefits of this strategy over bringing in supply teachers; the cost; their sense of commitment and other strengths; limited scope for other options; and to develop those HLTAs, for reasons of enhancing flexibility, and to become self-resourcing.

Headteachers were used to provide cover in some circumstances, including when finances made this a necessity; and when cover staff were insufficiently confident. **Existing teaching staff** were also used to provide cover, including a SENCO, a part time teacher, who covered the headteacher's amassed PPA once a term, and a floating Music teacher.

Contract extension involved writing in an additional 10 per cent to the contracted teaching hours of part time staff. This meant they were paid for the additional time, thereby ensuring the school met statutory requirements. This provided a solution for part time staff, with one headteacher expressing that it would be her preferred means of providing PPA for all part timers. The table above does not reflect the fact that at least two schools provided PPA time for their PPA cover teachers through contract extension also.

Teaching Assistants (TAs) were used to provide cover with minimal preparation work in one school where the benefit was that children were familiar with them. The table above does not reflect the fact that TAs were used as additional support for those providing PPA cover in some cases. Reasons for not adopting this approach (as well as the HLTA approach) were that on the whole, TAs did not want the added responsibility. Further, a lack of skills, and pressure against this choice from governing bodies and teachers, as well as the fact that time saving benefits to teachers of TAs carrying out Specified Work were questioned, caused most headteachers to avoid this route.

On the whole, use of **supply teachers** was the least favoured by stakeholders. Various reasons were given for this, including the unfamiliarity supply teachers had with school policy and practice; a judgment about their skills, which were seen to be lacking; the lack of ownership and commitment they were perceived to have; the way that this approach did not

foster sustainability within the school; problems finding suitable people; not wanting to bring in a generalist; and avoidance of negativity from teachers over this issue.

10.2. Perceived purpose of PPA

This section examines the variations in perceived purpose of PPA across the six schools as a basis for discussion relating to the deconstruction of the policy by practitioners. Analysis of interview transcripts showed that individuals perceived PPA time to have been designed to meet one, or a combination, of a number of purposes. Purposes were given as: raising standards; tackling work/life balance; and tackling issues of recruitment and retention. The means by which PPA was perceived to be 'designed' to achieve each of these purposes is explored in the following illustrations, which represent respondents' statements diagrammatically, and were generated with qualitative data analysis software (NVivo). Of those indicating more than one purpose, some proposed causal relationships, such as work/life balance leading to standards and to retention of staff, while others viewed them as separate issues, hence their treatment as separate models.

Figure 10-1, Figure 10-2, and Figure 10-3 map the range of perceptions held by teachers and headteachers, about the purpose of PPA time, and how it achieved that purpose. Figure 10-1 demonstrates that, through a process of coding interview transcripts in NVivo, one of PPA's perceived purposes was found to be to raise standards. Raised standards referred to both standards in teaching and in learning; so improvements in pupil outcomes (achievement or attainment) and in the quality of teaching and classroom activities. The nine red bubbles emanating from the central point reflect the variety of ways in which PPA was considered to raise standards: for example, by enhancing skills of teachers, or by helping to develop TAs. Some of these nine red bubbles are broken down further to other levels, shown by orange, and then yellow, bubbles. For example, PPA was seen by some to raise standards because of the particular strategies schools adopted to implement it, which is indicated by the red bubble "Strategies". A number of different sorts of strategy were discussed, and these are represented by orange bubbles emanating from the red "Strategy" bubble. One of these was the pairing of teachers together with a colleague (orange bubble: "with colleague"). The fact that teachers could collaborate was said to raise standards because it brought about all those things shown in the yellow bubbles that emanate from "with colleagues".

The second and third models (Figure 10-2 and Figure 10-3) show that PPA was also perceived to be intended to enhance teachers' work/life balance, and to tackle teacher shortages. Bubbles emanating from the central points show *how* these were perceived to arise through PPA.

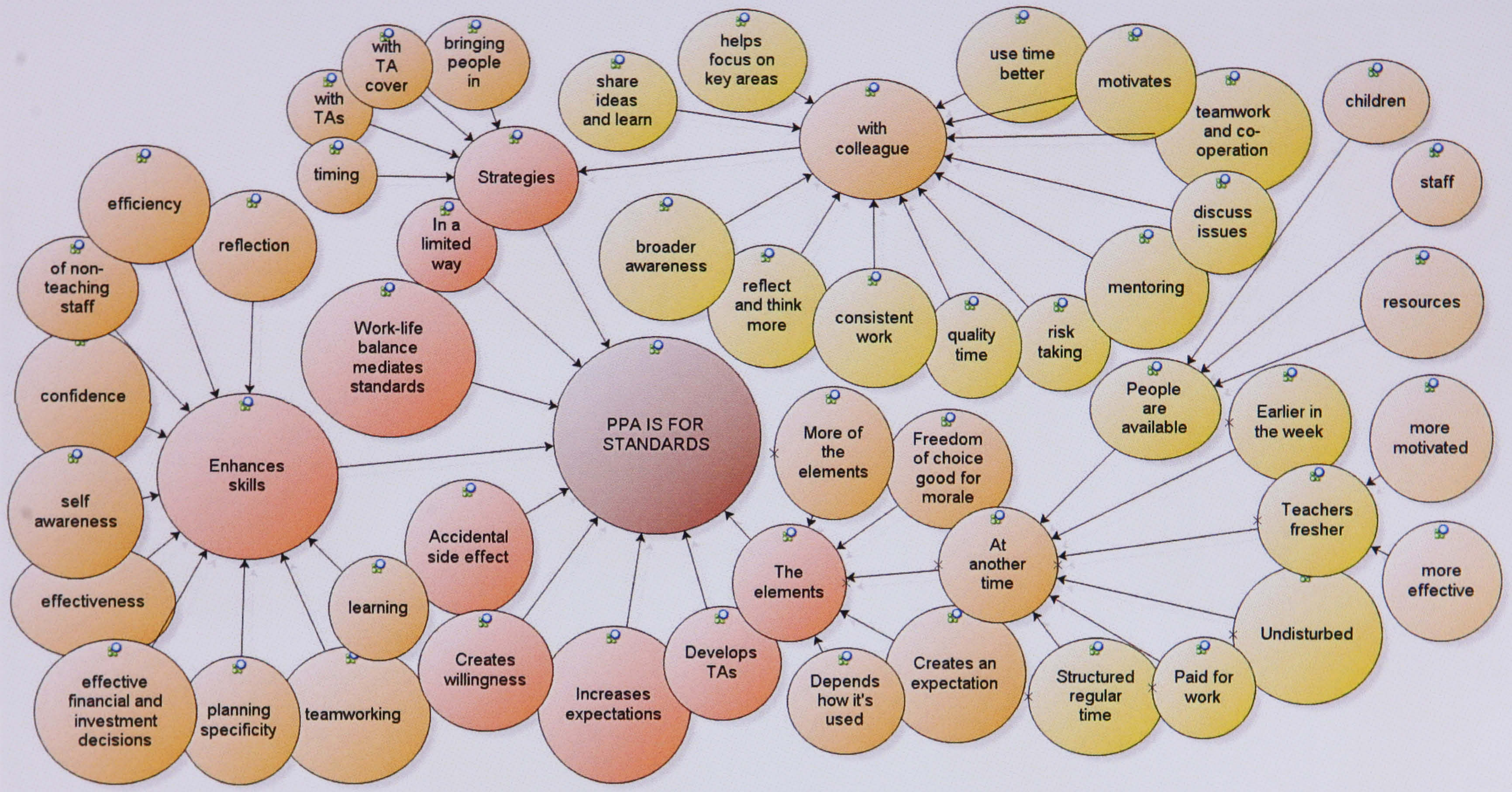

Figure 10-1 Perceptions of how PPA raises standards

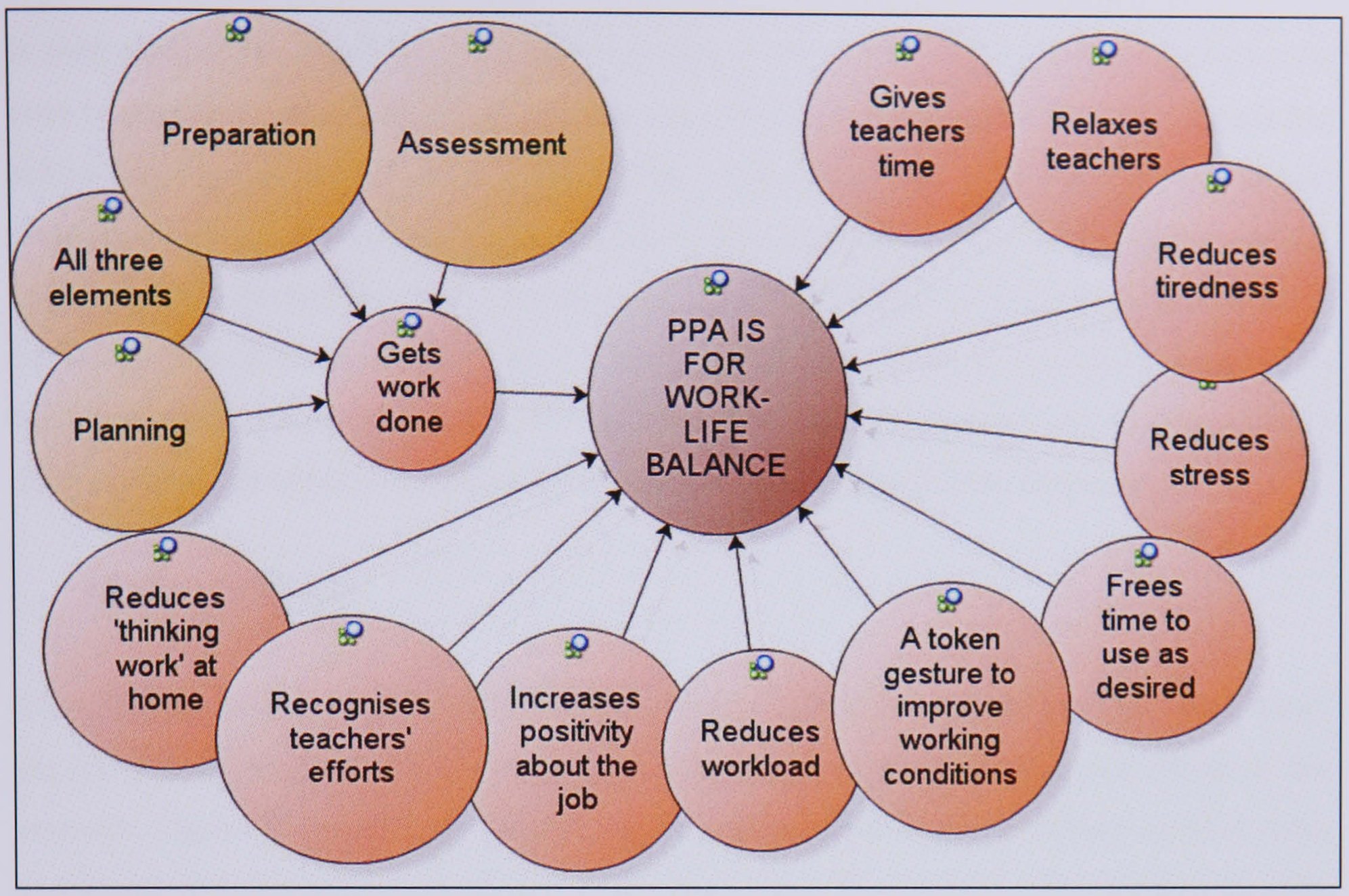

Figure 10-2 Perceptions of how PPA enhances work/life balance

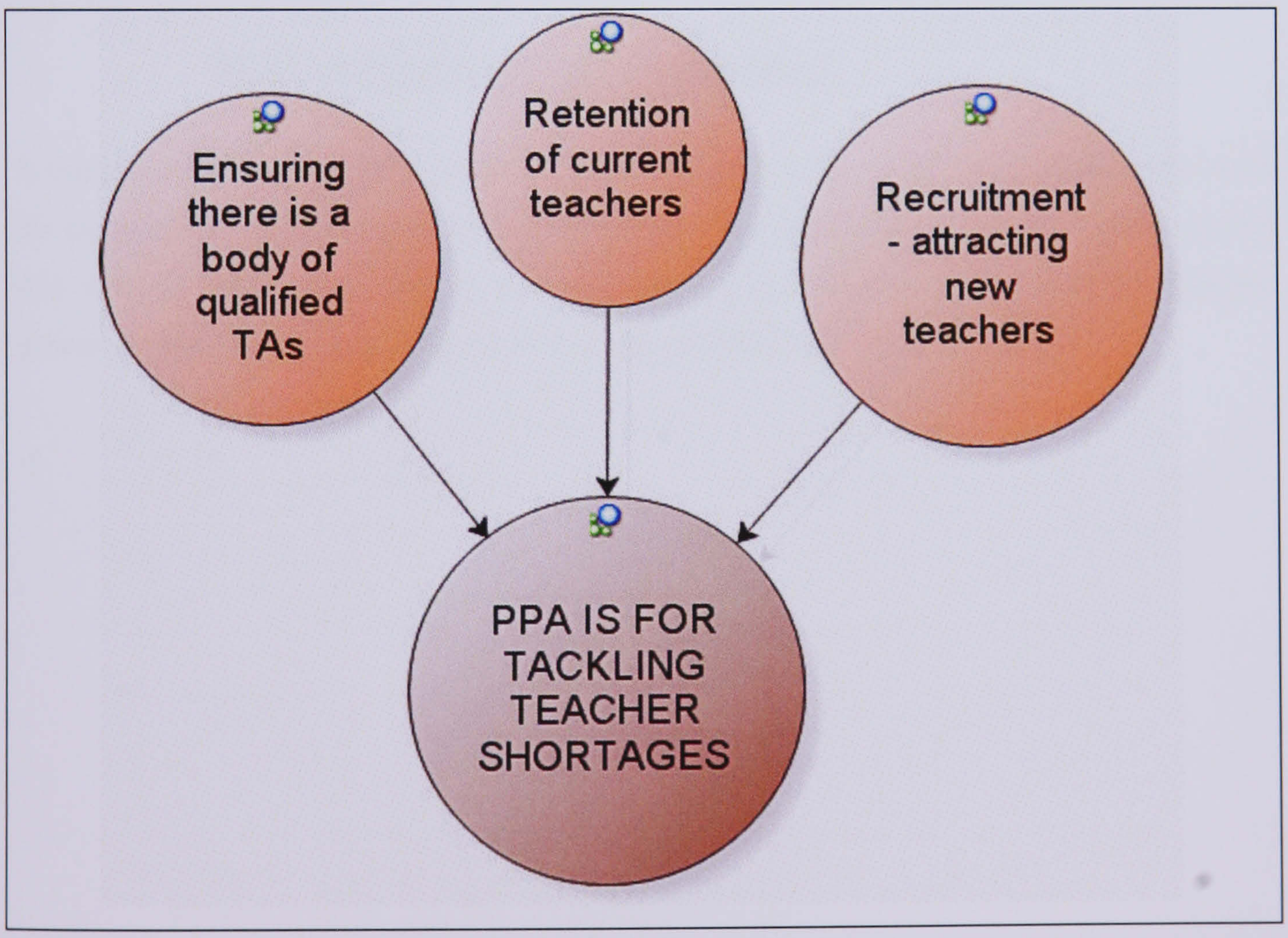

Figure 10-3 Perceptions of how PPA tackles teacher shortages

Figure 10-1 shows the multiple ways in which PPA is associated with raised standards. What is noticeable is the significance of PPA strategy to many of these. For example, PPA was seen to contribute potentially to raised standards at schools where PPA was taken during the school day (i.e. not through contract extension), where non-teaching staff were involved and developed, where people with additional skills were brought in, or where teachers worked collaboratively during their PPA. The significance of this section to the discussion will be in providing a basis for policy and practice recommendations. Further, perceived purpose can be compared to perceived outcomes to see if there is a link. Analysis for this is carried out in 10.6.2, where perceived outcomes are discussed, in preparation for the discussion.

10.3. Time

Time, particularly the notion that PPA provided *"more time"* (this comment arose many times), and the way in which teachers used that time, arose as an emergent theme in the research. These two aspects of time held significant influence upon the effects of PPA time, and so are investigated here as a basis for the discussion. The following two sections identify (a) a number of factors influencing how teachers spent their time, and (b) the range of effects that arose from teachers having extra time.

10.3.1. Influences on how time is spent

A number of influences on teachers' uses of PPA time were cited. Of particular note were the influences of leadership, teachers' own methods of prioritising activities, and the notion that other people were available to work with during that time. The following diagram, generated from NVivo nodes, depicts the emergent influences upon use of time.

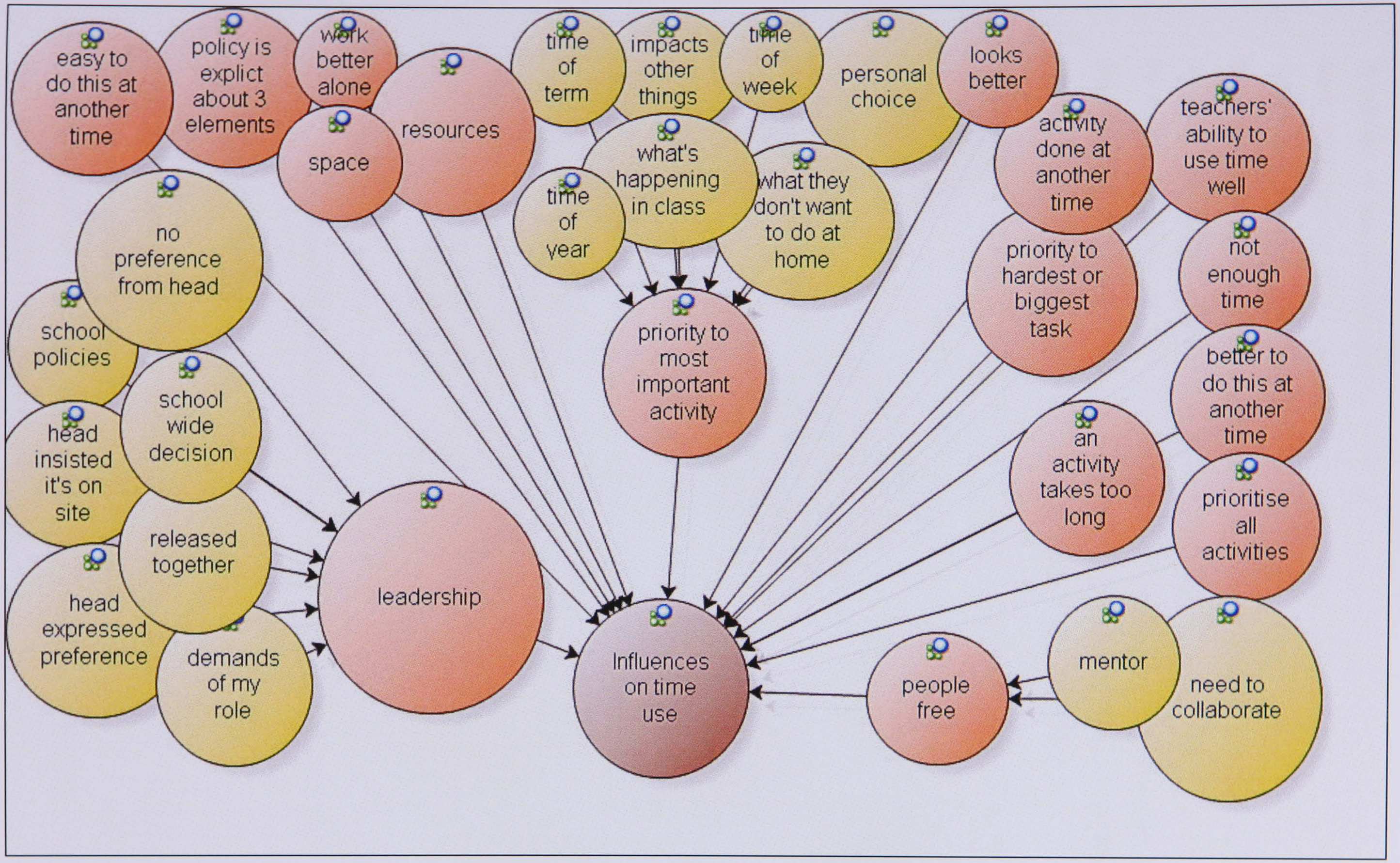

Figure 10-4 Influences on use of PPA time

10.3.2. The effect of having extra time

A number of time-related effects, revolving around changes in efficiency and thoroughness, were attributed to PPA's provision of 'extra time'. The themes of 'thoroughness' and 'efficiency' were emergent from the empirical data and are represented in Figure 10-5. Some themes explained how, and were related specifically to notions that, PPA reduced teachers' working week. Others could not be linked to specific time savings. What is interesting is that PPA was perceived to have both positive and negative effects on efficiency, and on thoroughness. A common theme for headteachers was that the reduced working week did not apply, and in some cases they commented that more work was created.

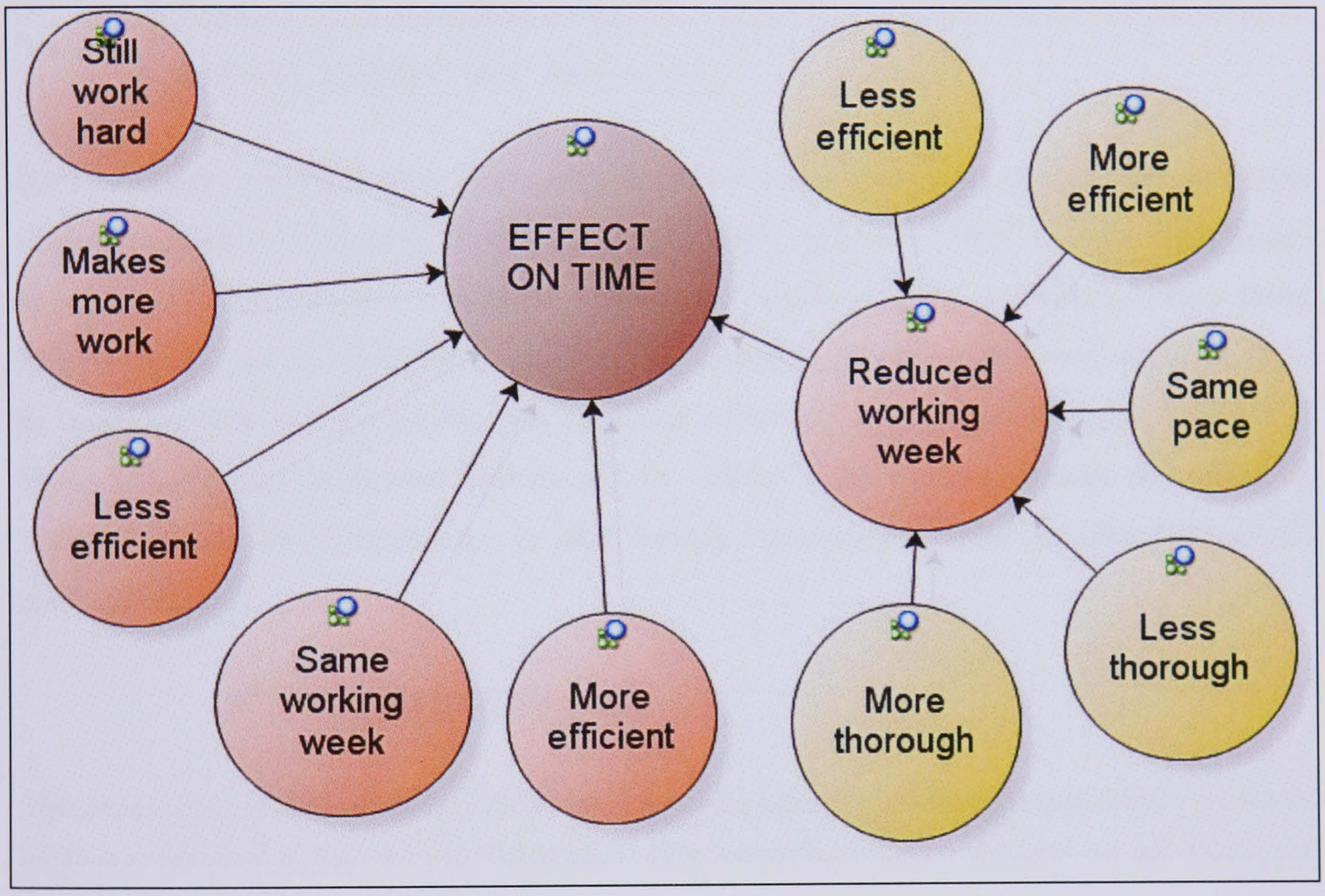

Figure 10-5 Time-related effects of PPA's provision of extra time.

10.4. Influences

As explained in the case study chapters the influences on provision of, and effects of, PPA time were examined under Stoll's (1999) framework, which gave three categories of influence: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher', and a number of sub-themes. A number of key emergent findings from this research were that:

- implementation, and 'effects', of PPA were affected by a number of contextual 'influences';

- 'influences' were consistent with Stoll's (1999) framework of 'external', 'school', and 'teacher' influences;
- most of the sub-themes emerging from the research were naturally consistent with Stoll's sub-themes;
- within the 'external' category, three themes emerged: 'inherent policy details', 'external support', and 'external pressure' (highlighted in Table 10-2);
- within the 'teacher' category, another theme emerged: 'use of PPA time' (highlighted in Table 10-4).
- within the majority of the themes, new sub-themes emerged;
- sub-themes varied in importance;
- 'influences' (and sub-themes/influences) could be identified as one of three types: 'qualifiers', 'enablers', and 'inhibitors'.

As a reminder: 'enablers' were those influences that, upon interpretation, were seen to enable implementation of PPA, and/or to enable the positive effects of PPA to arise. 'Inhibitors' were those influences that were seen to have the opposite effect. 'Qualifiers' were those influences that did not contribute positively in themselves, but their absence would be seen as inhibitive (see section 4.4 for first reference to this). Prior to examining the 'effects' of PPA, and relating particular 'influences' to 'effects', this section details the series of 'influences' and their sub-themes, in table format, classifying each as 'qualifier', 'enabler', and/or 'inhibitor'.

10.4.1. External influences

This research found a number of external influences upon implementation of PPA consistent with the themes driven by the literature, with 'inherent policy details' as an emergent external influence. A number of sub-themes also emerged, as detailed in the following table, which shows the influences pertinent to each of the schools 1 – 6 and their sub-themes, where relevant. Where a number appears in parenthesis in a table, this indicates an influence that either had a very loose bearing upon PPA's implementation and positive effects, or that had potential to fit within this influence category should things change at the school represented by that number. Influences are not expanded upon further at this stage, because they will be discussed alongside the effects upon which they impacted (section 10.5) Numbers in bold type show the number of schools where a particular theme was significant. For example, it can be seen clearly that the influence 'inherent policy details' was an 'enabler' at all six schools, as indicated by the '**1,2,3,4,5,6**' in the corresponding box. The influence is broken down into sub-themes below that.

INFLUENCES AND SUB-THEMES		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor
Community		**4, (6)**	**1, (6)**	**(3)**
	Source of cover	4, (6)	1, (6)	(3)
Political action/tone		**1, 3, 5**	**1, 4, 6**	**2, (6)**
	Funding	1		2
	Extended Schools Agenda		4	
	Political will / legislation	3, 5	6	(6)
Inherent policy details		**1, 4**	**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**	**4, 5, 6**
	In the working day		1, 2, 3, 6	
	Extra time		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
	Regular		3	
	Delivery of training			(4)
	Funding			4, 5, 6
	Statutory	1, 4		
	Non-directive role of Head			5
	Sense of valuing teachers		2, 3, 4, 5	
Professional learning infrastructure		**1**		
External support				
	Local Authority		1	
External pressure		**4**		
	Unions	4		

Table 10-2 External influences at each school (emergent findings highlighted)

10.4.2. School influences

Influences at school level were potentially the most impacting upon implementation of PPA. These factors were contextual, varying from school to school. A number of sub-themes also emerged, as detailed in the following table, which shows contextual influences pertinent to each of the schools 1 – 6 and their sub-themes, where relevant.

INFLUENCES AND SUB-THEMES		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor
Culture		**4, 6**	**1, 2, 3**	**5, (6)**
	Openness	4	1	5
	Positive		2, 3	5, (6)
	Community oriented			5
	Co-operative	5		
	Provisional trust	6		
History		**3,**	**2, 5, 6**	**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**
	Size	3	6	1, 2, 3, 5
	Part time staff			1
	Improvement		2	6,
	Finances	3		2, 4, 5, 6
	Turbulence			(5)
	Priorities		5	5
Mix of pupils		**1, 4, 5, 6**	**3**	**1, 2**
	Positive attitudes / behaviour	1, 5, 6	3	
	High proportion SEN			1

	Problem children			2
	Cohort	4		
Leadership		**3, 6**	**1,2,3,4,5**	**(6)**
	Attitude towards PPA		1	
	Influence over activities		2, 3, 5	
	Efficient organisation	3, 6		
	Vision		1, 4, 5	
	Communication of vision	(6)	4, 5	(6)
	Change in leadership	(6)		(6)
Structures		**1, 2**	**1,2,3,4,5,6**	**1,2,3,4,5,6**
	Accommodation		2	1, 3, (4), 6
	Assessment policy	1		
	PPA strategy (cover)	2	1, 3, 4, 5	(4)
	PPA strategy (collaboration)		2, 3, 4, (5), 6	(4)
	PPA strategy (contract extension)			5
	PPA strategy (with TAs)		4	
	Timing of PPA	2		2
	Development of TAs		4	
	Staff meetings		5	1
	School organisation		3, 6	
Power issues		**1, 6**		**(6)**
Morale		**1, 3, 6**	**2**	
Relationships		**3, 6**	**1, 2, 5**	
Support staff		**2, 5, 6**	**1, 3, 4, 6**	**5, 6**
	Skills		3, 4	6
	Teachers can plan for them better		1	
	Provided a solution	5, 6		
	Sustainable	2	4, 6	
	Familiar with pupils	2		
	Lack of willingness			5, 6

Table 10-3 School level influences at each school

10.4.3. Teacher influences

Influences upon implementation of PPA at teacher level were context dependent also, with a number of sub-themes emerging, as shown below. The table shows contextual influences pertinent to each of the schools 1 – 6 and their sub-themes, where appropriate. 'Use of PPA time' was an additional emergent influence at the teacher level.

INFLUENCES AND SUB-THEMES		**Qualifier**	**Enabler**	**Inhibitor**
Beliefs		**1, 3, 4**		
	Skills of TAs	3, 4		
	Developing TAs	4		
	Who should take a class	1		
Commitment		**1**	**2**	
Confidence		**1**		
Emotional well-being		**1, 6**		
Motivation		**1**	**3, 6**	
Interdependence			**5**	**1**

Skills		**1, 4**	**2, 4, 5**	
	Of cover teacher	1	5	
	Of teachers	1, 5		5
	Skill gap		2	
	Flexibility		4	
	Organisation	4		
Experience (role)		**4**	**2, 3, 4, 6**	**1, 2, 3**
	Role limits perceived effects			1, 2, 3
	Leadership role impinges			2
	Helps leadership role		2, 4	
	Mentoring		3, 6	
	Learning from own/others' experience	4	3	
Use of PPA time			**1,2,3,4,5,6**	**(4)**
	Collaborating with others / TAs		2, 3, 4, 6	(4)
	Coaching		1, 2, 3	
	Feedback		1, 2, 4	
	Subject area monitoring		1, 2, 5	
	Meeting staff meeting targets		1, 2, 4	
	Resource planning		1, 4	
	Contacting outsiders		1, 4, 6	6
	Specific subject planning		3, 4, 5, 6	
	Assessment		3, 4, 5, 6	(4)
	Risk taking		4	
	Reflection		4, 5, 6	
	Reviewing planning		3, 5	

Table 10-4 Teacher level influences at each school (emergent finding highlighted)

10.5. Effects

Twelve 'effects' of PPA were derived from a series of frameworks (Table 3-2) concerning the 'conditions', 'components', or 'dimensions' that create capacity, and which organisations must possess. A series of questions was posed around these areas (collectively called 'capacity themes' for simplicity) as shown in Appendix 9. These questions provide the basis for examining the 'effects' of PPA time to see if they fall in line with these frameworks, or if alternative understandings of capacity emerge. This section brings together the contextual 'influences' from the preceding section, and the twelve 'effects' of PPA that these 'influences' affect, in order to show *how* PPA brings about these 'effects'. (As a reminder, this study labels the same 12 'themes' as *'effects'* where they relate to effects arising from PPA, and *'themes'* where they relate to the theoretical frameworks.)

This analysis will proceed by discussing the contextual causes – i.e. 'influences' - of effects arising, or not arising, from PPA time at the six schools. This serves the purpose of meeting the research aim to examine the contextual factors, or conditions, under which the benefits of PPA might be maximised. Twelve tables (shown in Appendix 12, along with an explanation of the rigorous interpretive process used consistently for each) were generated from case study data in order to examine influences on the twelve effects. The following 12 sections

are a discursive account of the contextual variables affecting PPA's ability to bring about each of the 12 effects. Each of the 12 effects are now examined in terms of Stoll's (1999) framework, which gave three categories of influence: 'external', 'internal', and 'teacher'. Within these three levels, most sub-themes are consistent with Stoll's (1999) own, although 'policy details' and 'use of time' are emergent. The 12 effects will be explored at each of these three levels.

10.5.1. Developing staff

As seen in Appendix 9, the effect 'developing staff' was operationalised in terms of development in teaching and assessment skills; improvements in the way staff worked to develop one another; and enhanced expectations of pupils. PPA was credited with developing staff at four schools, marginally so at Underwood, and not at Westfields. In terms of the policy itself, the provision of extra time arose as a major theme, and was credited with Developing Staff through a number of means. Teachers associated improvements in skill with a number of improvements in their practice: it made them more organised; better prepared; more able to plan, prepare, and reflect on teaching; more likely to consider, and pass on thoughts to other teachers; more likely to take risks and try new things; better at assessment if this was carried out in that time; and more aware of the knowledge levels of pupils. Improvements in these areas were not always associated with enhanced 'skill', particularly with regard to assessment, but nevertheless, teachers considered these areas to be carried out more thoroughly in some cases, and to be done *"as you know it should be done"* (2201).

Certain features of schools were perceived as conducive to staff development through PPA. At Barfields, for example, a culture of openness allowed teachers to question one another during their PPA time. At Underwood the historical fact that assessment was already on the agenda helped ensure teachers used PPA for assessment, and thus, became more skilled at it. At The Orchard, school organisation that facilitated teachers moving between year groups added to the benefits of collaborative working by ensuring teachers' strengths and skills were shared more broadly across the school as a whole. On the other hand, some positive existing school features led teachers to point out that PPA did nothing more to enhance certain areas of staff development under question. For example, at The Orchard, issues of assessment and staff development were said to be discussed within the context of existing school staff meetings. Where teachers felt they already had high expectations of pupils, which was mentioned explicitly at Barfields, Meadows, and Westfields, they did not consider PPA would enhance this, regardless of how much improved their knowledge of pupils became through assessment.

Where PPA was seen to contribute to skill development, a major influence upon this was arrangements that facilitated collaborative working. Significantly, in schools such as Millfields and The Orchard, where collaborative working was a major part of PPA time, this was seen as being a key to successful use of PPA time. Collaboration provided opportunities to share ideas, expertise, take part in peer coaching, and put new things into practice. Some level of collaborative working was also facilitated in schools where structured collaboration was not possible; at Hall Garden in particular, by ensuring teachers were released simultaneously, and that there was somewhere suitable for them to work. Although release was simultaneous for two teachers at Underwood, lack of suitable workspace, and the opportunity for them to leave the premises meant collaboration was limited. The same applied at Meadows on a Wednesday afternoon, when accommodation became problematic.

Whether or not PPA was credited with developing staff was dependent, in part, upon teachers' use of that time. Time spent in peer coaching ensured ideas were shared, thoughts were refined, and boundaries were pushed in terms of taking risks in the classroom. Assessment skills, and knowledge of individual children's progress, were said to be developed through spending the extra time on assessment activities that PPA provided. The skill of being able to use time productively, however, was said to be a prerequisite to further skill development by the headteacher at Underwood. Two teachers in particular, both NQTs, said they would benefit from learning to use their time better. In similar style, the headteacher at Barfields suggested that where opportunities for non-compulsory, extra professional development or training were provided during PPA, it remained down to the motivation of individual teachers whether they chose to pursue this.

10.5.2. Involvement

As seen in Appendix 9, the effect 'involvement' was operationalised in terms of responsibility for learning on the part of pupils; and an increase in parental involvement. PPA was not said to improve involvement in any of the schools (Appendix 12). While extra time provided by PPA was said to facilitate feedback to children, it was acknowledged at Barfields, Hall Garden, Meadows, and The Orchard, that this was not how they spent PPA.

Existing school-wide beliefs and priorities in terms of involving children inhibited PPA's perceived potential to add to this. At Meadows, for example, children were heavily involved in setting the curriculum when a new topic area commenced. The Assessment for Learning initiative, strongly at the forefront of teachers' minds at Underwood, already emphasised the role of involving children in their own learning. Existing positive parent/teacher relations,

and well developed parental involvement mentioned at Barfields, Meadows, and Westfields, was seen to inhibit PPA's perceived potential to improve this.

PPA's effect on involvement depended upon whether or not teachers spent time feeding back to children and parents, and perhaps also assessing children. At Barfields, one-to-one assessment of children was not featured in PPA time, which contributed to the perception that PPA did not enhance involvement of children.

10.5.3. Leadership

The effect 'leadership' was operationalised in terms of enhanced responsibility for decision making. PPA was not said to improve leadership in any of the schools. PPA's provision of extra time was only very loosely associated with contributing to leadership at Barfields, where it was said by two teachers to enhance their decision making abilities and confidence by both reducing fatigue and giving them time to improve their knowledge.

Evidence from Barfields, a smaller school than most, suggested that where responsibilities were corporate and teachers took on many responsibilities, perceptions of the extent to which PPA enhanced their decision making power or responsibilities were lesser. This was also the case at Meadows and Westfields where responsibilities were shared out and teachers made decisions for themselves. These existing leadership patterns were said to aspect decision making more strongly than PPA was.

In terms of PPA strategies, collaborative working arrangements at the larger schools, Meadows and The Orchard, were said to facilitate more of a shared responsibility within partnerships, so that teachers' span of concern and influence was widened to account for a whole year group. Even at Hall Garden, where collaborative working was not formalised, discussion and solidarity with colleagues had potential to strengthen teachers' confidence in taking concerns forward to bring about change. Conversely, issues discussed in staff meetings could be discussed further in PPA time.

The extent to which teachers were motivated to take on extra responsibility affected their attitudes to the issue of leadership. At Barfields, a small school, all emphasised how they did not wish to take on further responsibility. In the same vein, existing leadership roles limited the extent to which PPA was perceived to enhance decision making opportunities. At Barfields, Meadows, The Orchard, and Westfields, comments reflected that where teachers were already responsible for a particular area, they did not associate any part of PPA time with helping them to do this job, as it would have to be done anyway. A teacher at Meadows

pointed out that they already had Leadership time, which had more of an impact in terms of decision-making, than did PPA. Similarly, general decision making, aside from that which was demanded of leadership, was expected from all teachers in any case.

While on the whole, teachers did not perceive PPA to enhance leadership, the notion that time spent assessing enhanced decision-making knowledge arose at Barfields and Underwood, demonstrating that use of time had some impact here, particularly for leaders developing assessment initiatives.

10.5.4. Co-ordination

This related to co-ordinating with colleagues in order to co-operate better; sharing ideas and supporting one another; formalising communication processes; and taking a broader view of work. PPA was said to improve co-ordination at all but Underwood; and Barfields only marginally. Even where collaboration was not formal, PPA was seen to improve co-ordination and co-operation through its provision of extra time, by giving teachers opportunity to work alongside one another (where release time was simultaneous). Even at Barfields, a smaller school where collaboration was less likely, two teachers suggested PPA helped them prepare better to contribute and share ideas in meetings. Further, PPA's regularity, and timing during the school day meant TAs could be present – particularly at Westfields and The Orchard where teachers worked in pairs already and TAs were free – which formalised communication.

Open, or positive, cultures were said to impact both negatively and positively. Open culture meant that at Barfields, where formalised collaboration was not possible, co-operation still arose from encounters between staff. A co-operative culture at Hall Garden was said to be enhanced by PPA's provision of time together in one room for a group of normally disparate individuals. At Underwood however, an existing positive, co-operative culture inhibited perceptions that PPA enhanced this further.

Staff at Hall Garden and Underwood considered formalisation to be an alien concept because there were too few staff to make co-ordination problematic, or formalisation necessary. Further, the schools' small size prevented formalisation in the sense of year group pairings. In these environments PPA was less likely to be considered to lead to formalisation. At Westfields, however, where year groups consistently had more than one class, co-ordination was seen to result from pairing teachers during PPA.

Where accommodation and timing of release allowed teachers to spend their PPA time together, this facilitated co-ordination even where a collaborative working strategy was not possible, for example at Hall Garden. Conversely, contract extension (Underwood) and lack of accommodation (Meadows on Wednesday afternoons) clearly did not facilitate collaboration. Collaborative working, as part of the PPA strategy adopted in Meadows, The Orchard, and Westfields, was a major factor in ensuring PPA was perceived to enhance co-ordination (more so than co-operation, which was frequently said to be positive anyway). It was seen to broaden teachers' views to incorporate classes beyond their own. Even where communication was free anyway, the formalisation afforded by set times for working with a partner enhanced this.

A range of time uses contributed to the effect 'co-ordination'. Working with colleagues was the obvious one, which arose at Meadows, Westfields, and Underwood. This varied from carrying out observations, informal encounters in a PPA room, helping with colleagues' queries, or working with TAs. At Barfields, a common perception was that activities improving teachers' knowledge and confidence facilitated idea sharing and, therefore, co-ordination.

10.5.5. Reflection

'Reflection' related to development of the school's agenda for improvement; recognition and use of staff skills; and monitoring improvement and changing plans accordingly. PPA was said to improve reflection at Barfields, Hall Garden, and The Orchard; Meadows only marginally. Extra time allowed teachers to monitor school improvement. Teachers frequently commented that prior to PPA, non-contact time was used to finish their own day-to-day tasks. They were now more able to consider and work on targets relating to the school agenda and discussed as a wider staff, or their subject area, although it was a common theme that these tasks were structured in elsewhere. For example, through whole-school initiatives (Meadows), working parties (The Orchard), staff meetings and policies (Underwood and Westfields).

Where culture positively recognised strengths of all staff, or relationships were already very open, PPA was not seen to increase that knowledge. In Hall Garden, which was a small one-form entry school, it was pointed out that the school's improvement agenda needed to be discussed in larger groups and that this was more likely to happen during PPA at larger schools. Presence of an established network of staff at Westfields meant strengths were recognised prior to PPA, which was not, therefore, seen to promote further recognition of strengths.

In schools where support staff were used either to provide cover directly, or where they worked alongside the cover teacher or with the class teacher during PPA, their skills and strengths came to the attention of teachers. Planning teachers carried out for support staff, and extra responsibility support staff had, helped to enhance the their professionalism and utilise these strengths.

Certain structural aspects of the school and of PPA strategy were said to facilitate 'reflection'. For instance, cover strategies that included HLTAs or TAs (The Orchard and Meadows), involving TAs in teachers' PPA time (The Orchard), and asking cover teachers to cover lessons that reflected their own particular expertise (Barfields), were all strategies said to utilise strengths of those staff. Particular team pairings could be beneficial to the development of certain individuals, to the utilisation of the coaching skills of other teachers, and to the development of ideas for the improvement agenda. The notion that such benefits were limited to partnerships between limited numbers of teachers arose, with teachers at two larger schools, The Orchard and Meadows, suggesting school-wide collaborative reflection was still limited.

Where activities focused wider than teachers' own class or to leadership role, they were more likely to relate it to monitoring the school's improvement agenda. Activities included spending time on their specific subject area, or putting into practice school targets and areas discussed in staff meetings.

10.5.6. Collaborative planning

'Collaborative planning' related to development of school wide aims for pupil learning. PPA was said to improve collaborative planning at Hall Garden, and The Orchard; Meadows only marginally so. Teachers considered PPA to enhance school-wide target setting because of the extra time it allowed to carry out related activities.

Although PPA practices that paired teachers were said to strengthen collaborative planning, a teacher at Meadows suggested partnerships had limited scope for facilitating school-wide collaboration. The same comments were noted at The Orchard and Meadows in relation to the effect 'reflection', above. As with the effect 'co-ordination', wider school structures such as staff meetings, existing priorities, and initiatives were stronger determinants of school wide collaboration than was PPA at Underwood and Westfields.

A theme common to those schools where 'collaborative planning' was said to benefit from PPA, was that when targets were set or issues skimmed over in staff meetings, teachers then

had the opportunity to research, discuss, and incorporate them into planning in a more focused way. Staff meeting issues included a school-wide focus on problem solving in Maths (Barfields), a school-wide Writing agenda (The Orchard), and Assessment for Learning (Underwood), another school-wide initiative.

10.5.7. Learning community

'Learning community' related to enhanced collaboration among teachers to achieve school-wide aims for pupil learning; enhanced reflection upon challenges; and increased opportunity for them to influence school-wide activities and policies. PPA was said to improve 'learning community' at only Hall Garden and Meadows. The fact that PPA provided teachers with extra time in which they could carry out certain activities, contributed towards its ability to enhance the school as a learning community. The timing particularly within the school day meant teachers had access to people and resources, which fostered communication at Hall Garden.

At The Orchard, an existing open culture minimised the effect PPA was said to have upon the influence of teachers. As with 'reflection', although PPA practices that paired teachers were said to strengthen teacher collaboration, allowing reflection in a non-pressured environment, there was another argument suggesting that partnerships had limited scope for facilitating this on a school-wide basis. As with the effects 'co-ordination' and 'collaborative planning', wider school structures at Underwood and Westfields, such as staff meetings, and teacher observation, were often stronger determinants of school wide collaboration than was PPA.

At Barfields, it was perceived that teachers' responsibility for their own professional development was part of the job. Consequently they did not necessarily associate PPA with greater reflection. Peer coaching at Meadows was said to help staff to reflect, self-evaluate, and try new things collaboratively.

10.5.8. Programme coherence

'Programme coherence' related to a tying in of plans for staff learning and pupil learning to wider school goals; sustaining plans for improvement, and the policy itself being sustainable. PPA was said to improve programme coherence at Barfields, Hall Garden, and Meadows. Overall responses at The Orchard, Underwood, and Westfields were only marginally negative, however. All heads, with the exception of James at Westfields, took the view that PPA would be sustainable because it had to be, with comments like *"it's got to be, hasn't it"*

(2100), and *"I don't think we've got a choice about it"* (2500) reflecting this. James was the only headteacher to say that it would be sustainable with the proviso that *"government put money into it"* (2600).

Headteachers at Underwood and Westfields, both of whom had drawn attention to the lack of funding attached to PPA, suggested sustainability was also dependent upon political will to maintain it. At the two larger schools, Meadows and The Orchard, comments were more reflective of how pressure from teachers, or perhaps unions, would ensure continuation of PPA. Within the policy itself, its statutory status contributed to its perception as sustainable. Extra time allowed teachers to focus on fine detail and on bringing in elements of the learning process, such as active learning, and so ensuring a coherent programme of learning. Regularity of PPA each week was seen as contributing to a strengthening of the mentoring process, through which staff and pupil learning were tied to wider school goals.

Staff at the schools were aware that finances could be problematic. At Hall Garden and Westfields, where budgets were said to be particularly tight, the majority of teachers interviewed commented upon the importance of funding. At Meadows, Barfields, The Orchard, and Underwood, however, comments about funding were limited to one or two. A concern raised by a three teachers at The Orchard was illness of cover staff, although only one teacher linked this to finances. Absence was said to be problematic at Hall Garden and The Orchard, where a number of different people were used to provide cover.

Collaboration with others, particularly through coaching, allowed teachers to discuss issues that may be raised in wider staff meetings, and to contribute to cohesive curriculum development at Meadows. At The Orchard, however, some teachers had a narrow a view of what PPA time should entail, which limited perceptions about the ability of PPA to improve anything other than planning. At Underwood, association between PPA and sustainability of plans was seen by the headteacher as limited. He suggested teachers' professionalism and aptitude to complete jobs regardless of time constraints meant extra time provided by PPA was not the sole contributor to sustainability of plans at Underwood.

10.5.9. Resources

'Resources' related to improved teaching curriculum, materials prepared and used to teach, assessment tools, technology; and improved financial ability of the school to deliver its objectives. PPA was said to improve resources only at Meadows; marginally so at The Orchard. With the exception of Underwood, where preparation was acknowledged to be only a small part of PPA, teachers at other schools considered PPA to contribute positively to

resources through its provision of extra time within the working day, when resources were to hand. Resources could be sourced, used, and purchased more appropriately, with less wastage. Headteachers at Barfields, Meadows, and Underwood were optimistic that extra time in school would contribute to value for money by allowing money to be focused on things in a more informed fashion. In terms of direct improvements of finances, however, PPA was not seen to benefit because of the direct expense involved, and lack of funding for the policy.

Perceived effect on finances was a problem irrespective of school size. At Barfields, despite the headteachers talk of value for money, she suggested that being a smaller school led to greater financial burden, particularly related to an increase in SEN pupils. Finances were still talked about as problematic at The Orchard, however, because despite good financial management, staff were aware of the costs associated with PPA. In terms of PPA strategies benefiting resources; collaboration with TAs at The Orchard allowed the task of creating resources to be delegated. Use of HLTAs at Meadows was seen as good value for money.

PPA was beneficial for resources not only when it was used directly for preparation, but because it gave teachers extra time after school for activities related to resourcing. As for 'programme coherence' above, the headteacher at Underwood noted that preparation must be done, and that professional teachers would do so regardless of PPA.

10.5.10. External support

This related to making better use of people from outside the school. PPA was said to improve resources at Hall Garden, and marginally at Barfields and Meadows. Free time during the school day made contact with external people easier. Extra time facilitated creativity in planning and highlighted areas where children could benefit from external help. At Barfields the headteacher suggested the policy had influenced some external agencies to advertise their services to schools which, again, helped involve them.

Finances were seen as potentially inhibiting the use of external people, regardless of time spent thinking about who to involve. Staff at Underwood considered the school to be community oriented anyway and so PPA was not seen to bring about further involvement.

Whether or not teachers used their time to contact external people had significant bearing on whether PPA was perceived to bring about the effect "external support". At Hall Garden, creative planning in relation to specific subjects was seen to encourage teachers to think about who they might invite.

10.5.11. Processes

'Processes' related to improvements in processes; more careful target setting when planning; better transfer of planning into action; and improved result assessment. PPA was said to improve processes at all six schools. PPA was credited with improvements in processes such as planning, assessment, and reflection because of the extra time it provided for teachers for work/life balance so that they could carry out these activities in less of a rush. Assessments could also be more personalised if carried out in the working day.

At Barfields, a smaller school, collaborative target setting was considered not to benefit from PPA as it perhaps would in a larger school where teachers had the opportunity to work together. Instead, this was done in staff meetings. At Underwood, where assessment was a key school priority anyway, PPA was not considered a benefit to this process. In terms of strategy, collaboration at Meadows, The Orchard, and Westfields was considered to lead to improved processes through challenging discussions and shared preparation that encouraged teachers to try new things.

While PPA was seen to help subject area monitoring by one teacher at Hall Garden, on the other hand there was suggestion from a number of sources there that certain key activities, such as planning in depth or lesson delivery, were not improved by PPA because teachers' roles demanded effectiveness in these anyway. At all schools certain activities carried out during PPA were associated with process improvement. Assessment of individual children, for example, was more in depth and was less likely to compete with other activities for time. Planning could include more reflection upon the previous week's lessons and more carefully considered target setting.

10.5.12. Human resources

This related to motivation of teachers. PPA was said to improve the 'human resources' theme at all six schools because it motivated teachers. By allocating non-contact time for work that teachers felt had previously gone unrecognised in any financial sense, this had the effect of making teachers feel appreciated and valued. This had the further benefit of motivating teachers to contribute more readily.

Sharing of ideas and focusing on the task in hand, both outcomes of collaborative PPA strategies at Meadows and The Orchard, were said to motivate teachers. One comment at Hall Garden suggested motivation would be further enhanced if PPA cover was guaranteed and regular. For teachers whose PPA was provided through contract extension, such as Jill at

Underwood, the only motivation was provided through financial incentive and motivation brought about by extra time was not seen.

10.5.13. Overall trends relating to 'effects'

The 'effects' of PPA were contextual, varying due to their dependence on 'influences'. In recognition of this variation, the following is a diagrammatic representation of these 12 effects and their association with PPA time at the six schools. Each column represents one of the 12 effects. In each column, one square represents the overall trend in perception relating to a particular 'effect' at one school. The table is arranged so that from left to right, effects were decreasingly seen to arise from PPA. A key to colour-coding is given below:

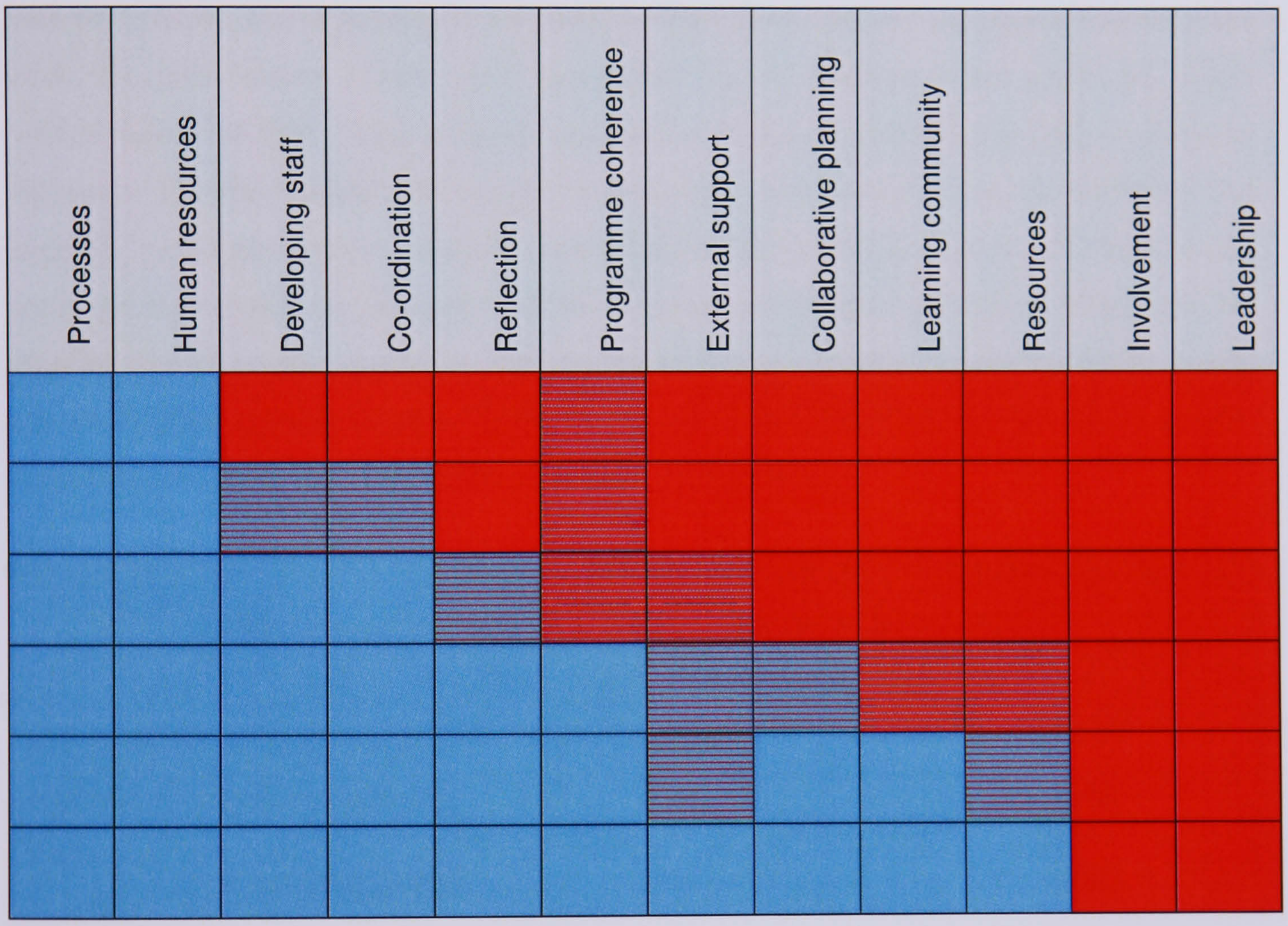

Table 10-5 Shows which of the 12 'effects' were perceived to arise from PPA

Positive	A blue square indicates that PPA was perceived to give rise to this effect at one school. The effects 'processes', and 'human resources' , for example, were seen to arise from PPA at all six schools
Negative	A red square indicates that PPA was not perceived to give rise to this effect at one school. The effects 'involvement', and 'leadership', for example, were not seen to arise from PPA at any school
Marginally positive	A blue square with red shading indicates that PPA was perceived to give rise to this effect at one school; but only marginally so. Appendix 10 gives a full

	explanation of how data was interpreted very carefully to distinguish between 'positive', and 'marginally positive' effects
Marginally negative	A red square with blue shading indicates that PPA was not perceived to give rise to this effect at one school; but only marginally so

Table 10-6 Key to colour coding of Table 10-5 and 'effects' tables throughout this section

With the exception of Westfields, this research observed a relationship between those areas schools perceived as being in need of improvement, and those areas PPA was seen to impact positively upon. Areas schools needed to focus on for improvement was taken from direct questioning of respondents about how important each of the effects of PPA were in order for their school to improve (see Appendix 9). Using this information on 'importance' of the various 'effects', and comparing it with data showing those 'effects' considered to arise from PPA, the table below (Table 10-7) quantifies this to illustrate what could be called 'effectiveness' of PPA. More in-depth explanation of the data behind this table is given in Appendix 11, which details the careful analysis used in its construction. At Barfields, for example, seven areas were considered important for the school to improve. Of these seven areas, six were positively affected by PPA, although two only marginally so. This could be equated (for illustrative purposes only) to an 86% rate of 'effectiveness' of PPA at this school. A point to carry forward to the discussion is that effectiveness rate varied greatly across the schools (0% at Westfields up to 90% at Meadows).

School	**A**: 'Effect' is important AND arises from PPA	**B:** Number of 'effects' considered important for improvement	Effectiveness rate (A/B)
Meadows	9 (three marginally)	10	90%
Barfields	6 (two marginally)	7	86%
The Orchard	4 (one marginally)	5	80%
Hall Garden	9	12	75%
Underwood	2 (one marginally)	6	33%
Westfields	0	3	0%

Table 10-7 'Effectiveness' of PPA

For the discussion, Table 10-8 identifies which of the twelve effects were considered important for improvement at each school, and yet not considered to arise from PPA time.

		Effect important but not arising				
	Number of effects considered important	Involvement	Leadership	Resources	Programme coherence	Collaborative planning
Barfields	7			×		
Hall Garden	12	×	×	×		
Meadows	10	×				
The Orchard	5				×	
Underwood	6	×		×	×	×
Westfields	3	×		×	×	

Table 10-8 Showing 'effects' considered important but not to arise from PPA

Table 10-7 will be related also to the following discussion of capacity; particularly to Table 10-9 in order to see whether there is any sort of relationship between the perceived 'effectiveness' of PPA (shown in Table 10-7) and perceptions of whether it builds capacity.

10.6. Capacity

In order to prepare the ground for discussion about how capacity can be understood, this section brings together the analyses of a number of sources of evidence that relate to the effects PPA is perceived to bring about, and to how members of the workforce understand capacity. Section 10.6.1, for example, compares perceptions about whether PPA builds capacity for improvement with the analysis of perceived effectiveness of PPA (section 10.5.13), to see if there is a relationship. Section 10.6.2 examines the sorts of capacity-related outcomes that respondents attributed to PPA. Section 10.6.3 then analyses the sorts of meanings respondents associated with 'capacity for improvement'.

10.6.1. Is PPA perceived to build capacity?

Teachers and heads were asked whether they considered PPA to build capacity for improvement in their school. Because of the directness of the yes/no answers given, and the variety in answers even within schools, Table 10-9 is used as a simple way to present

findings. Using the data in this way is not an attempt to find levels of statistical significance, or to 'prove' any hypothesis. To construct the table that allows comparison of responses, nominal values of +1 for "yes", 0 for "no", ½ for "yes and no", and for "yes, in a small way" were used to represent the range of responses, which were found in the NVivo coding system. Schools are listed in Table 10-9 from most to least positive that PPA builds capacity. At Meadows, for example, 100% of respondents believed that PPA helped build the capacity for improvement at the school.

School	Respondents	Number of responses				Extent of agreement that PPA builds capacity
		"yes"	"no"	"in a small way"	"yes and no"	
Meadows	6	6				100%
The Orchard	9	7		1	1	89%
Underwood	4	2		2		75%
Barfields	4	3	1			75%
Westfields	6	2		4		67%
Hall Gardens	6	2		3	1	67%

Table 10-9 Extent of agreement at each school that PPA builds capacity

This table can be compared to Table 10-7 to see whether there is a relationship between perceptions that PPA builds capacity for improvement, and perceived effectiveness of PPA. Given the methodological implications of this type of research, numbers used here are only an indication of strength of agreement, and it would be inappropriate to draw conclusions from statistical correlations between Table 10-9 and Table 10-7. Tables should be used with discretion and in recognition of this. Comparison of Table 10-9 and Table 10-7 (section 10.5.13) allows some points to be observed, however:

- At Meadows, Barfields, The Orchard, and Hall Garden, responses about PPA's ability to build capacity were generally positive, and PPA was generally seen as effective. While this does not 'prove' anything, it suggests a link between effectiveness and capacity.
- Responses at Westfields relating to PPA's ability to build capacity were predominantly 'luke warm'. Staff acknowledged some benefits, but did not see them as significant. In this light, the effectiveness rate of 0 does not seem wholly out of context. This evidence also suggests a link between effectiveness and capacity.

- At Underwood, two out of four staff suggested that any improvements PPA made in terms of capacity sat within a much wider framework, including changes such as staff development and the school development plan. As with Westfields, the effectiveness rate of 33% does not seem entirely out of context.
- Although the majority view at all schools was that PPA did build capacity for improvement, at no school were all 12 'effects' seen to result from PPA

10.6.2. Perceived capacity-related outcomes of PPA time

This section is an analysis of the sorts of capacity-related outcomes respondents predicted would arise from PPA. These capacity-related outcomes were derived from Hadfield et al.'s (2002:8) finding that theoretical distinctions in Education tend to relate capacity either to *"a general ability or potential of a school to improve pupil outcomes, manage and learn from change, and sustain their own development"*, or to *"the types of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and relationships required of individuals and teams with a school that underpin its development"*. This analysis summarises findings from interviews that asked respondents to rank the following as outcomes of PPA time (linked to the distinctions above), using the criteria *"very likely"*, *"possible"*, or *"unlikely"*:

- the school is better able to sustain improvement
- the school is better able to manage change
- pupil learning and their outcomes are better
- teachers develop their skills and knowledge
- something else

Table 10-10 shows which of these five sorts of outcome were perceived as being most and least likely to arise from PPA time. This provides some evidence about how outcomes of PPA can be related to 'capacity'. Further evidence is given in 10.6.3, where respondents were asked what they considered 'capacity building' to mean. Table 10-10 shows that perceptions about the most likely outcomes of PPA time did not change over the course of the year in three of the six schools (the first three in the table below). The table is colour coded as per the key below, to show which sorts of outcome were perceived as being most likely. The table also shows changes in perceived purpose, to allow comparison.

	School	Outcomes Round 1	Outcomes Round 2	Purpose Round 1	Purpose Round 2
Perceptions of outcome did not change	2	Primarily 'other', then 'school', then 'teacher'.	Mostly 'other', then 'school', then 'teacher'.	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. Also to improve working.	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. Increasingly to improve working.
	3	School', then 'teachers', then 'other'.	'School', then 'teachers', then 'other'.	Predominantly work / life balance for retention and for standards. Also to raise standards.	Predominantly for raising standards through improved processes. Also for work / life balance.
	5	Primarily 'school'.	Primarily 'school'.	An overall recognition of two agendas: primarily work / life balance, but standards and progress in learning were also acknowledged.	Primarily standards. Most emphasis on provision of time to allow monitoring of learning through assessment.
Perceptions of outcome changed	1	Mostly 'school' / 'teacher', then 'other'.	Mostly 'school' then 'other' then 'teacher.	Predominantly to improve work / life balance although with an ulterior motive such as union pressure, staff retention, and standards. The head believed it had little effect on work / life balance.	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. One teacher mentioned more effective planning and preparation.
	4	Primarily 'other', then 'school', then 'teacher'.	Primarily 'school', then 'teacher' and 'other'.	Primarily work / life balance, then improved working and standards	Primarily improved working, then work / life balance, then standards
	6	Primarily 'teacher' then 'other' then 'school'.	Mostly 'other'. 'Teacher' / 'school' outcomes considered unlikely.	To improve work / life balance.	Predominantly to improve work / life balance. Also to improve working.

Table 10-10 Changes in perceived outcomes and purpose of PPA over the year

	Indicates that school level outcomes / purposes were perceived as most likely.
	Indicates that teacher outcomes were perceived as most likely.
	Indicates that outcomes / purposes other than those related to the school or to teachers were perceived as most likely.

Table 10-11 Key to Table 10-10

For most schools PPA was seen to have the sorts of outcomes that reflect an improvement at school level; particularly pupil learning and outcomes. At Hall Garden and Westfields, however, the most likely outcomes of PPA were seen in terms of improved work/life balance for teachers. Staff at Hall Garden were uncertain of PPA's ability to improve school outcomes particularly because of the way it had been implemented, which led teachers to question the quality of learning that children were receiving during that time. Once teachers at Westfields had settled into the routine of PPA they were on the whole sceptical about PPA's ability to do anything other than improve their own work/life balance. The headteacher's conviction that funding was a problem contributed to this also. This finding is very much in line with the discovery that staff here considered the purpose of PPA to be driven almost exclusively by the need to provide teachers with better work/life balance, as seen in Table 10-10.

What is also seen from the table is that perceptions of purpose and outcome were consistent with each other within interview rounds at Hall Garden, Meadows, The Orchard, and Westfields. So although views of purpose and outcome changed - from one end of the year to the other - at The Orchard, they changed in line with one another from 'work/life balance', to 'school-level outcomes'. At Underwood, the overarching purpose and outcomes were seen in terms of school-level. The only apparent misalignment between purpose / outcomes was seen at Barfields, where PPA was seen to be about improving work/life balance, but was seen to improve school-level outcomes. This masks the fact, however, that the misalignment was only slight (as standards were seen as an ulterior motive relating to purpose), and the fact that the headteacher saw PPA to be about standards, and to a much lesser extent that there were possibilities for work/life balance.

10.6.3. What is capacity building?

This section is an analysis of the sorts of meanings associated with 'capacity for improvement'. It examines respondents' interpretations of the term 'capacity for

improvement' as a basis for discussion about whether they relate to the twelve 'effects' (derived from frameworks of capacity themes as examined in section 3.2.2) or whether alternative understandings emerge. The following figure, generated from the NVivo analysis software, represents the themes and sub-themes arising from interview data:

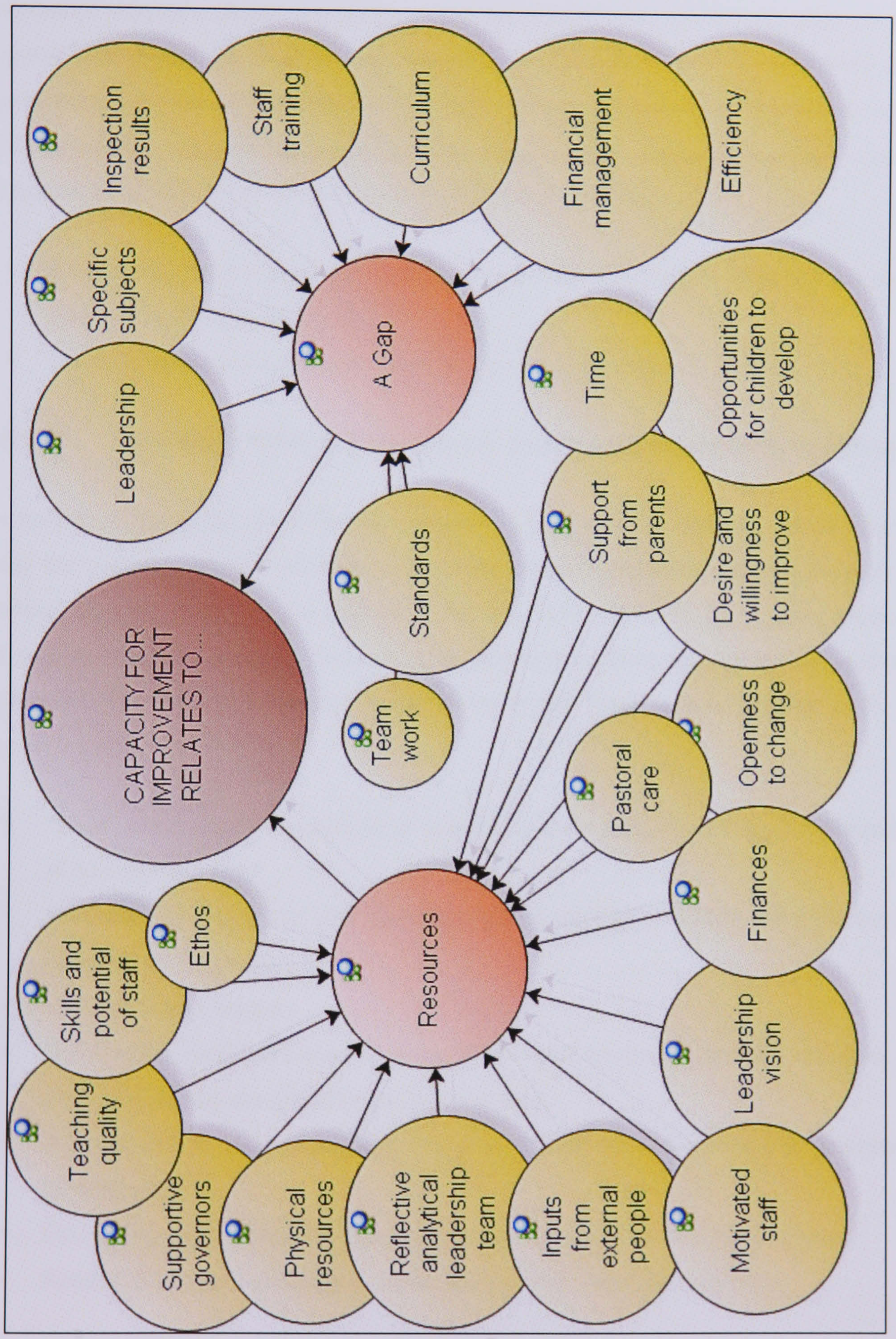

Figure 10-6 Themes and sub-themes relating to 'capacity for improvement'

As shown in the figure above, interpretations of capacity building fit into two themes: a 'gap'-based view, and a 'resource'-based view, as illustrated by the two red bubbles.

10.6.3.1. Relating PPA to a 'Gap'-based view of capacity building

A gap-based view of capacity signified *needing* the tools to improve. It represented a space, or opportunity to develop abilities or activities, such as teamworking or curriculum. Some suggested this gap was present in every school. From this perspective, PPA was seen to help fulfill some of these opportunities and bridge this gap, thereby narrowing a school's capacity for improvement. PPA's key contributions to this gap were as follows:

- It improved planning quality and built in greater expectation, allowing teachers to work on improving standards.
- It enhanced team-working and gave responsibility to staff.

10.6.3.2. Relating PPA to a 'Resource'-based view of capacity building

This notion of filling the gap links to a resource-based view of capacity, which signified *having* the tools to improve in order to meet the school's objectives, although under this definition 'capacity' was not the gap itself, but the ability to fill it. From this perspective, PPA was seen to build capacity because of its provision of these tools, resources, attitudes, or qualities. The range of possibilities is given in the figure above (Figure 10-6), and summarised here:

- 'Time' arose as key in a couple of schools, as there were a number of consequences of having extra time.
- PPA also developed the skills and potential of staff by providing for reflection and personal development.
- PPA motivated teachers.
- Where PPA facilitated teamworking, it provided resources such as networks, and skills, generating the capacity for improvement.
- It facilitated an open ethos that led to co-operation, and a belief in professional development.
- Discussion and collaborative assessment gave teachers an awareness of gaps.
- Reduction in stress and fatigue enhanced teachers' mental capacities.

Although PPA was generally seen to *contribute* these resources, for James at The Orchard the relationship between PPA and resources worked the other way also: he considered PPA would be most effective when a school could be self-resourcing. Heads at Underwood and

The Orchard were explicit that PPA's contribution to capacity building resources was situated within a much wider framework.

The notion that improvement should be sustained and continuous was interpreted from comments at each of the six schools. Interpretation of data suggested that this was possible when the potential benefits of resources were maximised. A school was said not to have the capacity for improvement when it was *"not being as efficient as [it] could be, or as effective"* (2100). A school where improvement was sustainable was one where staff were *"maximising every opportunity"* (2305) and *"push[ing] ourselves a bit more to be even better"* (2505). There were several instances of teachers expressing how maximisation of the benefits of one resource required another resource to improve. For example*: "we've got the space but not really the resources to be able to use it"* (2304); *"it's got the staff in place, but they probably need a bit more training"* (2202); *"staff needing extra training"* (2204); and *"[we have the] abilities; we need to...have the time and resources to do it"* (2409).

10.7. Summary

10.7.1. Strategy

A number of strategies were observed, including use of specialist teachers, HLTAs, existing teachers, TAs, and supply teachers, as well as contract extension of existing teachers. Five of six schools adopted mixed strategies.

10.7.2. Purpose / outcomes

PPA was seen have one or more purposes, including raising standards, enhancing work/life balance of teachers, and improving recruitment and retention in the profession. In terms of outcomes, school-level outcomes, including schools' ability to sustain improvement, manage change, and improve pupil learning outcomes; other outcomes, including teachers' work/life balance; and teacher-level outcomes, including developing teachers' skills and knowledge, were all seen as potential outcomes of PPA.

10.7.3. Time

'Time'; particularly the notion that PPA provided extra time for teachers, was an emergent theme. Impacting upon PPA's effects were (a) factors affecting how teachers spent their time, and (b) a number of possible outcomes of teachers having that time.

10.7.4. Influences

A number of key emergent findings from this research were that:

- the 'effects' of PPA were affected by a number of contextual 'influences';
- 'influences' were consistent with Stoll's (1999) framework of 'external', 'school', and 'teacher' influences;
- most of the sub-themes emerging from the research were naturally consistent with Stoll's sub-themes;
- within the 'external' category, three themes emerged: 'inherent policy details', 'external support', and 'external pressure' (highlighted in Table 10-2);
- within the 'teacher' category, another theme emerged: 'use of PPA time' (highlighted in Table 10-4).
- within the majority of the themes, new sub-themes emerged;
- sub-themes varied in importance, with some influences affecting other influences, as well as affecting the 'effects' of PPA directly. These were called 'higher order influences';
- 'influences' (and sub-themes/influences) could be identified as one of three types: 'qualifiers', 'enablers', and 'inhibitors'.

10.7.5. Effects

A number of key emergent findings from this research were that:

- 'Effects' of PPA were contextual. This research links the 'effects' and 'influences' (discussed in the previous section: 10.4) to show that perceptions about the 'effects' of PPA time were affected by the 'influences';
- Where PPA was perceived to give rise to one of the 12 effects, it was generally anticipated that this would continue into the future;
- A key 'influence' was 'use of PPA time'. Where practice was predicted to enhance use of PPA time, respondents perceptions about the 'effects' of PPA time that would arise in the future were often more positive than for the present;
- There was evidence of limits to these improvements in time use, and consequential 'effects' of PPA, mentioned above, in the form of one 'early adopter' school, where teachers had become set in their ways, and predicted no change in 'effects' of PPA over time.
- On the whole, PPA was seen to bring about the sorts of improvements each school considered important for them.

10.7.6. Capacity

Although at all schools the majority view was that PPA did build capacity for improvement, at no school were all 12 'effects' seen to result from PPA.

Respondents' interpretations of capacity building fit into two themes: a 'gap'-based view, and a 'resource'-based view. A gap-based view of improvement signified *needing* the tools to improve. A resource-based view of improvement, which signified *having* the tools to improve.

11. Discussion

This chapter discusses cross-case findings in light of the academic literature, with an overall purpose of unlocking knowledge within this research to crystallise the nature of capacity for improvement and how it is configured through policy implementation.

The principal aim of this study is essentially *to develop an understanding of 'capacity building'* in the public sector. By identifying gaps within the literature the objectives of this study, from a theoretical perspective, relate to (a) exploring the relationships between context and capacity themes by examining deconstruction and reconstruction of the PPA policy in schools; and (b) contributing to public sector policy and practice by clarifying 'capacity' and 'capacity building' and the relationship between them. This is carried out through an exploration of the implementation and effects of PPA time within six schools teaching children at Key Stages one and two in Worcestershire. A further substantive aim of this research is to determine the factors affecting the effectiveness of PPA time in the context of primary schools. It is this aim which, by its nature, provides much of the context for this discussion because of the richness and depth of findings pertaining to this aim, and which will be of particular interest to practitioners and policy makers. This more applied side to research findings is heavily bound up within the conceptual frameworks used to generate data and allow analysis, and it is the task of this chapter to unpick the analysis in order to highlight and discuss those key findings in order that recommendations might be made, and wider implications developed.

Having examined a number of guiding frameworks in section 3.2, the broad objectives reiterated above are broken down into a series of focused objectives and corresponding questions in Table 3-4, around the themes of 'purpose, outcomes, and strategy', 'influences and effects', and 'capacity'. The reader will have observed these topics reappearing throughout the case studies, and again in the cross case analysis, and it is these thematic areas which will underpin this discussion chapter; each falling primarily to discussion in one of the three following sections. As laid out section 3.2, in order to contribute to the theory of capacity building, this research utilises two key frameworks: twelve capacity-related 'themes', and a number of 'influences' upon capacity. These are triangulated against respondent perceptions about whether or not PPA builds capacity, and against their perceptions of its purpose and capacity-related outcomes. A range of findings emerge from the study in relation to these frameworks, and the approach taken to data collection means findings can be studied on a number of different levels, providing both questions and answers for the practitioner, the academic, and the policymaker.

11.1. Is PPA about capacity building?

11.1.1. Based on the relationship between purpose, outcome, and strategy

Before proceeding to examine *how* PPA builds capacity using the framework of 'influences', this section discusses PPA through the lens of perceptions of 'purpose', and 'outcome', to see *what* it is that PPA is seen to do. Where perceived purpose and perceived outcomes do not appear to correspond, this is discussed in the light of strategies adopted to allude to some of the reasons this might be. Findings relating to perceptions about (a) the capacity-related effects of PPA, (b) the purpose of PPA, (c) the capacity-related outcomes of PPA, (d) the effectiveness of PPA, and (e) whether or not PPA enhanced schools' capacity for improvement; can be triangulated to provide evidence for what PPA is about, and whether it is about capacity building. In doing so, this research presents a unique and valuable evaluative insight into the potential benefits of PPA.

The discussion begins by asking whether perceived purpose and outcomes of PPA are capacity related. The relationship between perceived purpose, implementation in schools, and the resulting perceived outcomes have important implications for policy communication. At Westfields, for example, teachers' understandings of PPA all relate it to work/life balance, which is reflective of the headteacher's view. The notion that it should have some role for the development of support staff is not perceived by teachers and, as a result, they see the use of support staff as less than satisfactory, serving no purpose besides meeting statutory cover requirements. At The Orchard, on the other hand, the headteacher sees PPA as *"a piece of a jigsaw in a very big puzzle"* where *"there's a lot more in it in terms of professional development with TAs"* (2400). While recognising that the headteacher sees a much broader picture than do teachers, his vision has implications for the way in which plans are communicated to, and received by, teachers. Although the issue of pay inequities arises, there is not the same sense of HLTAs being a bad choice as at Westfields. There are then, wider implications for striking a clear message to headteachers about the purpose of a policy.

Policy analysis reveals two core purposes of PPA: to raise standards and to tackle workload; It is designed to achieve these two core purposes through a number of means and, as such, it is somewhat open to interpretation, particularly by anybody hearing about it second hand. The headteacher at Underwood, for example, suggests that LA training was very much focused on the work/life balance element. The means by which PPA is designed to meet its purpose are: by enhancing the status and work/life balance of school staff, by enabling teachers to focus on their core role through bringing in other people as part of the school

remodelling process, and by enabling teachers to take some time out for professional activity, be it individual or corporate (TDA, 2007). This study shows PPA to be perceived by some respondents as a three-pronged approach to improving standards, however, with *recruitment and retention* added to the purposes work/life balance and standards. What is also clear is that not all members of the workforce recognise all three elements, or the linkages between them. Where teachers are told PPA is about work/life balance, as at Westfields, this is how they see it, and as a result they link it far less readily to standards. Some teachers see links between work/life balance and standards, suggesting the two are interrelated. In support of this view, a former member of the National Remodelling Team (NRT, interviewed for this study), currently with the Training and Development Agency (TDA), suggests that the policy recognises these linkages:

"PPA, as with the National Agreement [as a whole], was to reduce the working-hours pressure on teachers, such that ultimately it would lead to better standards in the classroom. That was the rationale for PPA...If you've got more time for planning and preparation then your lessons are going to be better planned and prepared...Also because planning and preparation can happen during the school day, for the first time really, teachers and support staff are able to come together during the school day and plan as a team...[or] across the year group...[and] you've got more people able to input things.." (Amy, TDA, formerly of NRT Sustainability team – 25/01/07)

Others are more cynical, seeing PPA as a means to soften teachers and keep them in their jobs by recognising the extra work they do in monetary terms, and perhaps giving them some of their work/life balance back. The phrase *"a token gesture"* (2400) is used by one headteacher. On the whole, whichever view of PPA is taken, **analysis shows a sound relationship between perceived purpose and perceived capacity-related outcomes of PPA** within schools. On the whole, PPA is seen to have the sorts of outcomes that reflect an improvement in school-level capacity; particularly the capacity to improve pupil learning and outcomes. Although work/life balance is generally seen to result from PPA, this is seen as a means to an end (i.e. it is something that will bring about standards) rather than an end in itself. This suggests that **PPA is seen to be about capacity building**.

This understanding is not universal, however, because staff at Hall Garden and Westfields see the most likely outcomes of PPA in terms of improved work/life balance for teachers, which is not in line with any sort of definition of capacity, as categorised by Hadfield et al. (2002). While at the other schools, work/life balance is seen as a means to an end, at Hall Garden and Westfields, work/life balance is the primary end. At both schools it is recognised that 'improved working' on the part of teachers might also be an outcome – particularly

towards the end of the year as PPA is perhaps used better by teachers – but teachers make no link between 'improved working' and standards.

So if PPA is not linked to capacity-related outcomes at two schools, does this mean it cannot be about capacity building? The question here, is why the link is not made at those schools. What analysis reveals in response to this is that at both schools, teachers demonstrate significant concern and uncertainty over the cover arrangements for their classes. At Hall Garden all teachers comment on the way in which TAs are expected to cover classes with little training, leaving the planning to teachers, which defeats the object and is of questionable value to the children. The same concern is expressed by teachers at Westfields. Teachers have to weigh up the loss to their class *"it's a bit extreme to say they're suffering; they're not suffering but I think it's 2½ hours out of their school week that could be better spent, the way we're organising"* (2202) against the potential benefits to themselves, both personally and professionally. When they already see PPA as being about enhancing work/life balance (perhaps because this is how it is communicated to them), it is understandable that they would give work/life balance (or maybe teacher outcomes), as the outcomes of PPA, and not suggest it is about enhancing pupil outcomes. This situation is not expressed at any other school. At Meadows, for example, HLTAs are seen as a positive asset to PPA time.

If outcomes at Westfields and Hall Garden are perceived as work/life balance and not school-level capacity-related outcomes, how is it that it is perceived to build capacity at both? The answer to this is that of the six schools, teachers at these two showed the least conviction in their association of PPA with capacity building. Again, this relates to the loss of a qualified teacher from the classroom for ten per cent of the teaching week. One further triangulation question: if outcomes at Westfields and Hall Garden are perceived as work/life balance and not school outcomes, and it is only weakly perceived to build capacity, how can it be seen to lead to any of the twelve capacity-related themes; and if it is, does this not put the twelve themes into question? Firstly, of the six schools, staff at Westfields associate PPA with the twelve themes the least. Having settled into the routine of PPA, teachers at Westfields are on the whole sceptical about PPA's ability to do anything other than improve their own work/life balance. The headteacher's conviction that funding is a problem, and that TAs are really the only option available to the school, contributes to this perception also. This finding is very much in line with the discovery that staff here consider the purpose of PPA to be driven almost exclusively by the need to provide teachers with better work/life balance. Secondly, one interpretation of findings relating to Hall Garden (where PPA is associated with the twelve themes the most out of all six schools) is that in a school recently

out of special measures, where teachers are very much under pressure to improve things, perhaps work/life balance is their most immediate thought. A better explanation might be that they do not see PPA leading to school-level outcomes because they see school-level outcomes as being about improving standards. The issue of weighing up costs and benefits mentioned already means they take the benefits of that extra time (that they might then bring back to the classroom) into account less readily because these are less tangible than the saving of work/life balance, or than the loss to the class. So is PPA about capacity building? This discussion looks closer now at the relationship between PPA and the twelve capacity-related themes.

11.1.2. ***Based on the relationship between PPA and the twelve capacity themes***

From school to school, the extent to which each of the twelve capacity-related themes are said to arise (in the form of 'effects' of PPA) varies. At no school do they all arise, and at no school do none arise. Had all twelve arisen at all schools, there would still be the possibility that other themes had not yet been considered by the literature or, indeed, by this study. One claim can be made, however. Findings show that it is not necessary for all twelve themes to arise from a policy before it is *perceived* to build capacity. At Meadows, for example, where as many as ten of twelve capacity-related effects are seen to arise, all members of the workforce who are interviewed perceive PPA to build capacity. In fact, with the exception of one teacher (at Barfields), all thirty-five teachers and headteachers consider PPA to contribute to capacity building, at least to some extent (as shown in Table 10-9) under their own definitions. Further, two effects; 'involvement' and 'leadership' are not effects of PPA at any school. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility they might arise in other schools. It does suggest, however, that PPA as a policy does not appear to give teachers more responsibility over decisions, or involve parents and pupils any more than they are already.

Although PPA is linked more strongly to school-level capacity-related outcomes at Meadows, Underwood, Barfields, and The Orchard, it is at Hall Garden where most of the capacity related effects are seen. The fact that teachers at Hall Garden are not as convinced about PPA's association with capacity building as teachers at Meadows or The Orchard, for instance, has been explained as being reflective of uncertainty over PPA's ability to improve school outcomes because of the quality of learning that children are receiving during PPA. The fact that so many of the twelve effects are associated with PPA, however, is likely to be reflective of the finding that Hall Garden is the school most in need of improvement. For example, at Hall Garden, all twelve of the capacity themes are considered important for improvement. What this suggests is that to some extent PPA might be seen to contribute to

nine of the twelve themes considered important (Table 10-7) because, in part, teachers do not attribute these to other initiatives within the school. This is contrasted with Underwood where, each of the four effects considered important but not arising from PPA (Table 10-8) can be traced back to perceptions that the school already did those well. Comments such as "*we're professionals and we want the job to be done properly.*" (2502), or the notion that an initiative such as Assessment for Learning is already in place, can be traced back through the case study chapters to show why each of these four are not considered to arise at Underwood. This suggests some level of attribution bias that may explain why improvement is more readily seen to arise in a school that (a) needs it; and (b) has nothing else in place to ensure it happens.

Interestingly, Underwood – where PPA is seen to have the least effect – recently obtained very rare 'Category One Status' for excellence and ability to share best practice, and is one of only eight schools in the Local Authority to achieve this status. It could be argued, therefore, that it has very little requirement for capacity building brought about by PPA. Of six effects considered important for improvement, as many as four are not perceived to arise (Table 10-8) because they come about through other means. On the other hand, Hall Gardens – where most effect is seen – is still in the early stages of improvement post-'Special Measures'. The explanation for this, interpreted from the data, is interesting in that it supports the notion that PPA has potential to build capacity. Findings are indicative that **a capacity building policy (such as PPA) has potential to be perceived to bring about more capacity-related change where more change is required**. At Westfields, for example, based on the finding that only three of the twelve effects are considered important for improvement, very little change is required. Even so, very little is attributed to PPA (Table 10-8 shows that none of these three effects are perceived to arise), and so teachers are fairly uncertain about its potential to build capacity. At Underwood, the notion that processes are already in place, and assessment is already firmly on the agenda, means PPA is credited far less with changes than are these other factors.

Taking this comparative finding that PPA is perceived to build capacity and yet not to contribute to all twelve effects (see Table 10-9 and Table 10-8), there is one explanation that fits the data, although this is given with a cautionary note against any universal rules. This is that **PPA is seen to lead to capacity building at each school because it (a) leads to improvements that meet respondents' own definitions of capacity building** (e.g. see section 10.6.3)**, and (b) is generally seen to bring about the sorts of improvements each school considers important for them** (e.g. see section 10.6.1)**.** This would suggest that the same policy can *be perceived to* bring about capacity building in different schools in

different ways. **A policy can be perceived to help meet a school's unique improvement needs dependent upon (a) the way in which they implement that policy, and (b) their perceptions about what they already do well.** Ergo, the same policy may bring about a different range of the twelve effects in each school, and yet commonly be perceived to build capacity because these particular effects are considered important for improvement at the schools concerned.

In terms of the appropriateness of the 12 themes as indicators of capacity then, two themes are not generally seen to arise from PPA ('leadership', and 'involvement') and yet PPA is still perceived to contribute to capacity building in the six schools. Although the capacity theme 'leadership' is considered important for improvement at only one school, 'involvement' is considered important at four (Appendix 11). Neither of these themes, however, are seen as particularly relevant to the policy's aims. For example, teachers with leadership responsiblity have Leadership Time in which to carry out related activities.

What is noticeable is that teachers and headteachers frame their understandings of whether policy relates to capacity building around whether they consider the policy to be living up to expectations of its purpose. Indeed, their comments about whether PPA builds capacity are focused on themes of work/life balance, standards, and improved working, in line with the TDA (2007) comment that PPA time aims to *"enable teachers to raise standards through individual or collaborative professional activity. The contractual change on PPA is also designed to improve teachers' work/life balance."*. This suggests that as well as being contextually dependent upon perceptions about the particular development needs of the school, **significance of themes to perceptions of whether a policy builds capacity relates also to the particular aims of the policy implemented**. Based on the above reasoning, it is argued that PPA is about building capacity, as a policy. Further, the fact that leadership and involvement were not considered to arise from it does not invalidate them as capacity themes. As explained, it means only that they were not targeted by this policy. The twelve themes will be returned to in discussion of capacity.

This discussion has highlighted the importance of context as a determinant of perceptions about whether PPA builds capacity. Across the six schools, different numbers of the twelve themes are considered important for improvement. At Hall Garden all twelve are cited; at Westfields, only three are said to want development. Although in general this research has indicated how PPA has potential to be perceived to bring about more capacity-related change where more change is required, it also highlights how there are many dimensions on which a school might improve, as indicated by the schools themselves, and points to the importance of targeting development in the right areas for schools at different stages of improvement.

Relating these findings to the scholarly literature, this is reminiscent of the comparatively recent proposition within the history of school effectiveness and school improvement, that schools at different levels of effectiveness require different improvement strategies in order to enhance their capacity for development. In a well cited paper by Hopkins et al. (1997) this argument was put forward and only relatively recently have researchers in the UK focused upon differentiating improvement strategies for ineffective schools, or those in challenging contexts (Chapman, 2004, Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001, Chapman and Harris, 2004). In a wider context, findings of this study support the notion that schools, and other organisations, will have different capacities for change and development (Hopkins et al., 1997) and so implementation of capacity building policy will have differential capacity-related effect across contexts.

11.1.3. Summary linking PPA to capacity building

Findings indicate that PPA is both intended to be, and seen as, a capacity building policy but that its potential for capacity building is relative, depending on the particular need for improvement within a school. This finding could perhaps be widened to suggest the same might apply to capacity building policies in similar public sector contexts. Findings indicate also that a policy designed to build capacity may be perceived to build capacity without contributing to development of all twelve of the capacity themes. In relation to those twelve themes, the same policy can bring about capacity building in different organisations in different ways, depending on the contextual variables: (a) an organisation's perceived requirements for its own improvement; (b) the chosen method of implementation; and (c) perceptions about the purpose of the policy. In a wider context than PPA, it could be argued that for a policy to be most effective in the greatest number of organisations, it should target all twelve capacity themes.

11.2. How is capacity built?

From examining PPA through the lens of perceptions of 'purpose', and 'outcomes', which focus on *what* PPA achieves, the discussion approaches from another angle now. While still based in teacher perceptions, this section looks through the lens of 'influences', to examine *how* PPA leads to certain capacity-related outcomes.

In terms of the twelve capacity-related themes, PPA's contribution to each of these varies, as seen in Table 10-5. At no school is PPA considered to contribute to the full range of capacity-related themes, but what it does do, and how it does it, is of interest for contributing to future policy design. In order to examine what it does, and how, the concept of

'influences' is used as a framework. The influences Stoll (1999) put forward are said to influence a school's internal capacity; that is, its power to engage in and sustain continuous learning (both of teachers and of the school itself) in order to enhance student learning. These were later referred to as *"influences on schools' capacity for learning"* (Stoll et al., 2002). Findings show that a plethora of factors, some peculiar to individual schools, hold great significance in determining, and perhaps predicting, the effects of PPA time upon a school. Consistent with Stoll's (1999) model, the influences on capacity are found not to be limited to the PPA time arrangements (which are but one aspect of the 'school' level influences), but to a wider range of factors, including those at 'external', and 'teacher', level. These three levels of factors affect a variety of mediators to teachers' work and pupil learning and outcomes, including teachers' behaviour and their working arrangements. In terms of these influences, this discussion will draw out a number of strands within the following sections. These sections relate the findings concerning 'influences' on the 'effects' of PPA to the existing literature, with a view to both developing the body of knowledge in these areas, and to drawing implications for policy and practice. This study seeks to examine Stoll's (1999) framework of 'influences on internal capacity' in the light of frameworks identified in Table 3-2, which identified twelve capacity-related themes to guide the study. In terms of this study, 'themes' are operationalised as 'effects of PPA'. This study makes a number of contributions to the literature in this area, examined in the sections that follow.

11.2.1. 'Types' of influence

Something that became apparent early on in the data chunking stages of this study was that a key emergent finding would relate to differences in how 'influences' act upon the capacity-related effects of PPA. As the data was coded in NVivo ready for formal interpretation, it was observed that as a teacher answered each question, there were certain underlying 'influences' whether implicit or explicit from their speech that affected their answers. So, for instance at Hall Garden, a teacher talking about whether or not PPA has enhanced co-ordination might refer to availability of a particular room that facilitates opportunity for working in proximity to other teachers during PPA. This pointed to a school-level influence that enabled the school to benefit from the capacity-theme 'co-ordination'.

A range of other contextual influences are also seen to enable the positive effects of PPA to arise. These sorts of influence have been labelled 'enablers' throughout this study, as an appropriate descriptive title. It is apparent from the context of quotations that other influences have the opposite effect, dependent upon context. These influences are seen to inhibit the positive effects of PPA, and are therefore labelled 'inhibitors'. Relating this back to the academic literature, Stoll's (1999) initial publication on the influences framework

suggested that influences could be positive, negative, or neutral. While this study provides empirical evidence for the notion that influences can be positive or negative, one of its contributions is the finding of a third category of influence that have more significance than being simply 'neutral'. It could be argued that if an influence is neutral, it is not in fact an influence. Stoll (1999) uses the label 'neutral' for any influence in her framework that is not seen to bear influence in a particular context. That situation arose in this study simply by a particular influence category not being discussed or alluded to in interview data. While it might be acceptable to label such non-influences 'neutral', it is, arguably, unnecessary. This study highlights a different type of influence: the 'qualifier'; whose absence would inhibit certain effects but whose presence does not contribute to PPA's ability to bring about positive effects. This study proposes these influences should be labelled 'qualifiers' rather than 'neutral', therefore.

The idea of labelling influences as 'qualifiers' and 'enablers' comes initially from the field of new product development; in particular, research by Noke (2006), which transfers the concept from its original use in the field of operations management. Noke's study adopts notions of 'order winners' (those factors which are key to winning a contract) and 'order qualifiers' (those factors without which dissatisfaction might occur) to fit her particular context: that of key themes which either contribute significantly to creation of a capability, or which are not yet significant enough to enable a capability.

Similar terms are also found in public management, and education, literature. Empirical research by Schofield (2004) into learned implementation of new public policy initiatives addresses two types of influences on implementation: 'constraints' to, and 'facilitators' of, learning. Constraints include problem complexity, lack of resources and information. Facilitators include organisational structures, organisational capacity (which was defined as spare resources), and expertise. Similarly in education, a project (Bolam et al., 2005) examining creation and sustainment of professional learning communities (one of the twelve capacity themes this study examines) refers to two types of influence: 'facilitators', and 'inhibitors', at both 'external', and 'site' level. It could be argued that Stoll's (1999) examination of three levels (which amount to external, organisational, and professional levels) could adequately encompass all other categorisations of barriers, including those highlighted earlier in chapter 2. For example cultural, structural, and skill related barriers (Martin, 1999); financial and temporal barriers (ODPM, 2003), and cognitive/emotional, and organisational barriers (Child and Faulkner, 1998). A contribution of the present study is that in translating these positive / negative / neutral influence metaphors into the particular

context of this research where they might be used to adequately explain findings, a novel set of metaphors: qualifiers, enablers, inhibitors, arises.

In terms of the findings relating to specific influences, discussion at this stage is limited to those influences that were found to have more than one occurrence across cases (identified through summary tables Table 10-2, Table 10-3, and Table 10-4), or to be particularly significant context-dependent findings, in order that findings might be synthesised in the following sections examining external-, school- and teacher-related influences. A summary table (Appendix 16) shows the full range of influences confirmed or brought to light by this study and the following sections discuss emergent findings.

In summary, in keeping with Stoll's position that an influence may be 'positive', 'negative', or 'neutral', in terms of the type of bearing it has upon internal capacity, findings from this study indicate three different types of influence also. This study proposes these influence types be labelled more appropriately: 'enablers', 'inhibitors', and 'qualifiers' respectively. Although some influences brought to light are specific to an Education context, the notion of enabler, inhibitors and qualifiers could apply to other public service organisations.

11.2.2. Indirect influences

This section discusses those factors that influenced implementation of PPA. A number of 'influences' were discussed, many of which were never linked to the twelve capacity themes. This is because a rigorous approach to data coding ensured influences were examined in light of the whole of interview transcripts, not just to where interviewees talked about the twelve capacity themes. The analysis drew out a number of influences upon how PPA was implemented, and how PPA led to positive effects, particularly through questioning headteachers directly upon contextual influences (see Appendix 6). Although the main focus of discussion on influences will relate to influences specifically linked to the twelve capacity themes, some key findings are explored here and linked back to the literature. Further, more detailed, explanation of the data used in interpreting for influences is given in Appendix 14.

11.2.2.1. External influences on implementation

This study finds one of Stoll's (1999) external influences to be perceived as being significant for implementation of this particular policy, but not for influencing the effects of PPA. This is **community**. An emergent finding was also the significance of **external support** as an influence on schools' ability to implement PPA. A contribution of this study is, therefore, in suggesting that for implementation of a centrally driven policy at school level, community

may hold more significance than Stoll's (1999) other influences (professional learning infrastructure, political action/tone, and global change forces), and that external support ought to be included as an external influence. Community provides a potential **source of cover** for PPA time and is, therefore, critical for some schools in enabling them to implement PPA. For other schools where external cover is particularly good, this influence becomes an enabler and where external cover is unavailable schools may have problems implementing PPA, or as at Meadows, may be unable to implement it in the way they had wanted ideally.

As an emergent theme, **external support** from the Local Authority (in terms of training and help with implementation strategies) is not assigned great significance but is, nevertheless an emergent finding that should be included rather than ignored. It is fairly likely that interview participants' thinking is more closely focused at teacher- and school-level, because it is at those levels that their everyday experiences are focused. Participants may, therefore, be more at ease discussing contextual variables with which they were familiar. Although not part of Stoll's 1999 model, the emergence of 'external support' (and also 'external pressure' as an influence on the effects of PPA) is consistent with other school improvement literature discussing the significance of this factor. Stoll herself later writes that *"schools need external support, and sometimes pressure, for improvement"* (Stoll, 2003:556) and highlights studies that have shown the importance of an infrastructure of support from parents, carers, governors, community, LAs, businesses, unions, universities, the government, and others; although these are not incorporated as external influences in her model. External support can help to build up an organisation's capabilities in areas such as technology. For example, a study (Wohlstetter et al., 1994:282), examining relatively successful restructuring schools, found that their continuous capacity building involved *"strong ties with organizations and associates outside the school for professional development and information sharing. Schools sought expert advice beyond the district and even beyond traditional educational circles"*.

Hopkins (1996) distinguishes between contextual strategy 'types' that schools in different situations might adopt in order to improve. 'Types' vary according to degree of external support required, ranging from 'high', 'moderate', to 'unnecessary'. Most commonly discussed as a source of pressure and support is the Local Authority (LA). Harris (2001:261), writing about the role of the LA as a change agent, suggests that building the capacity for change and development necessitates *"pressure and support from both external and internal sources"*. In their book on the role of LAs in school improvement, Woods and Cribb (2001) highlight that the government's 1997 white paper 'Excellence in Schools' set out the

comprehensive role LAs should play in raising standards of achievement: *"The LEA's task is to challenge schools to raise standards continuously and to apply pressure when they do not"*. In a report evaluating the implementation of Key Stage 3 (Stoll et al., 2003) the authors also discuss the necessity of LA support for policy implementation, and Chapman and Harris (2004) outline evidence that external support is important for improvement in disadvantaged schools. Indeed, the notion that external support might be important for internal capacity is built into this study (section 3.2.2) based on Ohiorhenuan and Wunker's (1995) model.

11.2.2.2. School influences on implementation

Of the nine sub-themes Stoll (1999) proposed held significance at school level, this study finds cultural and structural influences to be less significant than others in facilitating implementation of PPA in schools. An emergent finding is that the key influences for smooth implementation of PPA are leadership, mix of pupils, support staff, and relationships. In short, 'people' factors are key. While **leadership** holds only limited significance in terms of its influence on the twelve capacity themes, it is of particular importance at the implementation stage. Comments of teachers at Westfields and Meadows suggest **efficiency of organisation** by headteachers is a basic implementation requirement ensuring that plans run as intended and teachers receive their entitlement. Leadership enabling positive implementation of PPA is that which **influences** teachers to spend the time in a productive way, and which **communicates a vision** for PPA and its significant role for improving assessment (Underwood) and involving support staff (The Orchard), and not just for enhancing work/life balance.

Chris, headteacher at Underwood, believed PPA would be more effective if he was given more freedom to be prescriptive: *"If you are looking at 'value for money', I'm not convinced that what we spend on PPA time gives me value for money because of the way it's structured. I have little input other than to make suggestions about how people might like to use their PPA time"* (2500). The notion that leaders ought to be free to be selective about which reforms to adopt, and how to adapt them to their own organisational context has arisen in some of the literature critiquing policy both in Education (Hopkins and Levin, 2000, Chapman and Harris, 2004) and further afield, such as in the NHS (e.g. Shapiro, 2005). It would seem that this depends on the individual leader, however, and so a balance is to be struck because vision is particularly important to implementation in that headteachers need to be aware of the wider purpose of a policy (such as PPA) and the consequences of the strategy choices they make upon that. At The Orchard this vision includes the role of support staff; at Underwood it includes the role of assessment. At Westfields, however, the headteacher talked of the potential merits of closing the school for a morning or afternoon

and allowing teachers to work in key stage teams, which took no account of the role of PPA for one-to-one assessment, the development of support staff, or the loss of valuable contact time. This notion of vision is something that is becoming increasingly significant in the management of education (Bush and Coleman, 2000).

Leadership that influences use of time can have considerable impact on the benefits of policy implementation. Although not allowed to be directive, this study has found evidence of headteachers influencing teachers through conversations in staff meetings, by allocating teachers time in pairs (and so creating an expectation that teachers will work together, e.g. at Meadows), and by actively directing teachers in the pre-statutory phase (The Orchard). Some elements of PPA allowed choice while others did not. A cynic might suggest this relates to the government's tendency to centralise education policy, while decentralizing the responsibility for implementation (Gibton, 2003, Hopkins and Lagerweij, 1997, Hopkins and Levin, 2000). This makes headteachers responsible for the difficult bit: that of choosing a strategy with limited budget; *"an unfair trade-of that offers more empowerment than capacity tools"* (Gibton, 2003:680), without allowing them discretion over the whole of the policy.

A group of **pupils** whose behaviour is positive and who are adaptive to change facilitates implementation of PPA by giving headteachers the flexibility to bring in cover and not be restricted by pupil attitudes. In the same way, presence of a willing body of **support staff** provides a solution to PPA's cover requirement, although this can work the other way too as was seen at Underwood and Westfields, where TAs were unwilling to take on the role. A final key influence is **positive relationships** among teachers and between teachers and support staff, which is critical in enabling smooth implementation. This was mentioned at all schools with the exception of The Orchard where, significantly, PPA was seen as a continuation of the planning time teachers already shared and so little had changed in relation to the way teachers worked with one another and with their TAs in this respect.

11.2.2.3. Teacher influences on implementation

Of the eight influences put forward by Stoll's (1999) framework of influences at teachers level, one is seen as more significant than the others in terms of its effect on implementation of PPA time. The **beliefs** of teachers that TAs are competent to take over class cover is essential, facilitating implementation of support staff to cover classes during PPA. For some schools this is critical if use of support staff is their only option. This was observed in Meadows and The Coppice, both of whom used support staff as a major part of their PPA strategy. At Westfield, this belief was not present and the outcome was verbalised discontent

and the belief among some that cover was not the best in some classes and that learning may suffer.

11.2.2.4. Summary of influences on implementation

On the whole, the major influences on implementation of PPA are found to be at school level and to relate particularly to the 'people' element of school life, including leadership, support staff, pupils, and positive relationships. Community, external support, and beliefs of teachers are also significant. Hartle and Hobby (2003:384) express the importance of the people at a school as being *"the only really critical resource in schools."*. It is to be expected that the school-level is where decisions are made that concern implementation because it is at this level where responsibility lies *"for overall management and the establishment of policies, particularly with respect to how resources and strategies for staff development can be mobilized"* (Reynolds et al., 1997:84).

While these influences relate only to the implementation of PPA time and were not seen to influence the capacity-related 'effects' of PPA, they clearly have an effect upon what could be referred to as the school's capacity to implement the policy. In the sense that these influences affect implementation they are almost to be considered prerequisites to any capacity developed through PPA time itself, and in this sense have a contribution to make in their own right. It is proposed that influences on implementation are **indirect influences** on internal capacity and should be referred to as such.

With reference to the scholarly literature there is no reference to these sorts of influences in the frameworks identified by the literature review to date. One body of literature that may offer a fruitful avenue for consideration of these indirect influences, and for future research into them, is the area of implementation studies, although its application to practice is said to be rare (O'Toole Jr, 2004). Schofield and Sausman (2004) call for a revival of implementation studies, suggesting it provides an alternative to the more popular notion of evaluation. Indeed, an implementation approach would concur with the view of this study that the implementation process is more than just a consideration of conformance to performance targets. Schofield (2004:295) presents a novel approach, taking a learning approach to the implementation of public policies. She presents a model suggesting that managers need to *learn* to implement policies and that policy implementation varies *"according to the number and type of facilitators and constraints to learning"*.

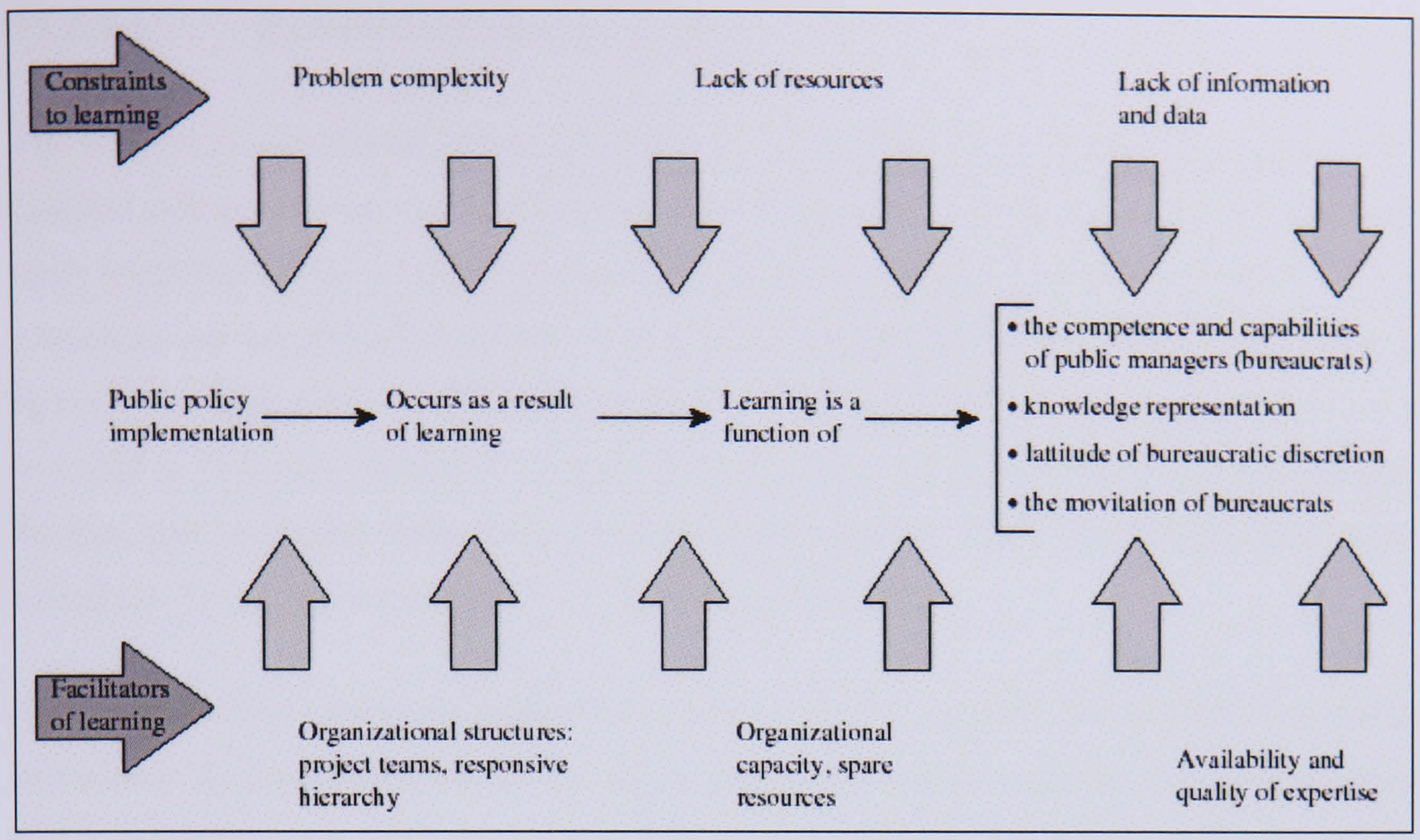

Figure 11-1 Facilitators and constraints to learning how to implement new policy (2004:295)

Her notion of 'facilitators' and 'constraints' to learning relate closely to the indirect influences found in this study, and which were 'enablers', 'inhibitors', or 'qualifiers' that influenced implementation.

In summary, a range of influences upon implementation are given the name indirect influences. While these fit with Stoll's (1999) model of influences, this study finds influences at school-level, particularly those related to people and leadership, to be of greatest significance in enabling policy implementation. The influences shown to affect implementation of policy include external support, community, leadership, positive relationships, behaviour / attitudes of pupils, support staff, and teachers' beliefs. While some of these are clearly peculiar to schools, it could be argued that the notion that organisation-level influences are key is transferable to other organisations in the public sector.

11.2.3. Direct influences

This section discusses those factors that influenced the capacity-related effects of PPA. These were drawn interpretatively from the data relating specifically to questions on the twelve capacity themes. The main theoretical findings of this study relate to the influences on the effects of PPA. In this area, this study is able to contribute a number of themes.

11.2.3.1. External influences on effects

The framework of external influences (Stoll, 1999) includes local and broader community, political action and tone, professional learning infrastructure, and global change forces. This study finds that in the context of the policy and twelve capacity themes in question, not all influences are equally relevant. For example, **global change forces** is too high-level and broad to be seen as an influence in this context. **Political will** bore some significance as it was said to influence the effect 'programme coherence' by ensuring PPA was maintained. Further, two emergent influences: inherent **policy details**, and **external pressure** were brought to light. This section will pick out the key influences.

An emergent theme is **external pressure**. As with external support mentioned in the context of influencing implementation, it is assigned little significance, however. Again, it is likely that respondents focus their thinking on influences at teacher- and school-level, with which they are more familiar. External pressure is discussed by respondents in two contexts. Firstly, at the two larger schools, Meadows and The Orchard, headteachers mention the power of teaching unions to challenge schools in breach of statutory requirements, although the general opinion was that it had to be done because it was statutory. As an illustration of this: at a sustainability workshop organised by the LA for headteachers, and attended as part of the fieldwork for this research, the overwhelming response from headteachers was to question why the LA was problematising the issue of sustainability because as heads, they just had to *"get on with it"*. Secondly, because PPA is a centrally driven policy, the **political will** to maintain it is a qualifier, ensuring it is implemented in schools where release time may not usually be provided for teachers. In terms of external pressures documented in the literature to date, Wikeley, Stoll, and Lodge (2002) identify the centralised approach to educational reform, which includes the national curriculum, national testing, OfSTED's inspection system, and publication of annual school performance tables. In common with Morelon (2006), they also identify increased accountability for performance (to both national government and to parents).

The notion that the threat of pressure from unions might influence schools to ensure implementation meets statutory requirements, is therefore a novel emergent finding, and one which would merit closer examination. In the six cases studied this is certainly only a minor consideration, but it cannot be assumed that union pressure would hold as little significance for schools in other localities. A possible explanation for why pressure from Local Authorities does not feature as an external pressure in this current study relates to Stoll et al.'s (2003) notion that LAs are one of the institutions whose job is to help implement the policy. They are thus seen as supportive, rather than as pressuring. The influence of unions

would be seen in a different light because they have no direct role in assisting implementation. This study thus proposes that Stoll's 1999 framework be modified to take into account the notion that there are a broader range of external influences, and many of these can provide both pressure and support.

As an emergent external influence, **inherent policy details** is highly significant, because it is an enabler at all six schools, as well as an inhibitor at three, as far as lack of funding is concerned. It is also the most noteworthy external influence, because no other is mentioned by as many schools (see Table 13-25). There are a number of sub themes to this influence, which are examined in Table 11-1 for clarity. Particular aspects of the policy that this research brings to light as influences are:

Type of influence	Influencing aspect of the policy
Enabler	PPA takes place within the school day
Enabler	PPA gives teachers extra time
Enabler	PPA is a regular time
Enabler	PPA as a policy conveys to teachers that they are valued
Qualifier	PPA is a statutory requirement
Inhibitor	There is no significant funding attached to PPA
Inhibitor	The headteacher cannot direct teachers' use of time

Table 11-1 'Inherent policy details' as a significant emergent external influence

The importance of policy details is an interesting finding because it ties in with a DfES report that examines implementation of the new Key Stage 3 strategy (Stoll et al., 2003). In this report three broad factors are said to interact with one another and affect implementation of a policy: external factors; capacity of those implementing the reform; and *the reform itself.* Aspects of the policy, such as its 'fit' with the school, its clarity, provision for flexibility, complexity, quality, practicality, and support that runs alongside it, are said to ensure smoother implementation. This current study proposes an addition to this list in terms of the 'inherent detail' of the policy being key, although this might tie in with Stoll et al.'s notion of 'quality'. Clearly, aspects of the policy itself have a potentially significant role in terms of enabling or inhibiting capacity building. In requiring that teachers have *"guaranteed time – 10 per cent of normal timetabled teaching time – for lesson planning and preparation"* (Bubb and Earley, 2004) the policy inherently provides three key enablers that between them are associated with all twelve of PPA's capacity related effects (see tables in Appendix 12):

- PPA gives teachers 'extra time'

- PPA is taken at a regular time
- PPA is taken within the school day

A major strength of PPA was its provision of 'extra time' that comprises ten per cent of teaching time that teachers no longer have to teach. This extra time was given enormous credit for facilitating many of the capacity themes, through a wide range of means, such as improving teachers' states of motivation, knowledge of their pupils, ability to take risks, and freedom to contact significant external people. In particular, the only capacity-theme extra time was not linked to was 'leadership', and only one school linked it to the theme 'involvement'. Both of these thematic effects were not seen to arise from PPA. It could be proposed that where a capacity-theme can be improved through extra time being spent on a particular activity, PPA has a contribution to make. There is one caveat to this, however, which relates to the teacher-level influence 'use of time'. Extra time can only lead to a positive outcome if the time is used for the correct activity. For example, extra time could have been used to improve the effect 'involvement' but on the whole teachers did not use their time in such a way that would contribute. The notion that they might use the time to call external people or speak to parents, or even work with and feed back to children, was in many cases purely hypothetical.

11.2.3.2. School influences

At school level, a number of influences are found to be significant. None provide new themes, and so are not examined in the same way that 'inherent policy' was examined as an emergent external influence (see Table 11-1). There are some emergent sub-themes novel to this research, however. These are **cultural** influences of **openness and positivity**; **historical** influences of **size, priorities, and finances;** the presence of **support staff** who could be used as a means of implementing sustainable PPA; and **structural** factors including **accommodation, school organisation** and factors related to **PPA strategy.** Supporting Stoll's framework, which refers to this influence level as *"the school learning context"* (1999), findings from this study show that whether a particular sub-theme is perceived to enable or inhibit implementation and positive effects of PPA is context dependent, varying from school to school. For example, while **support staff** are considered an inhibitor at two schools because of their lack of skills and willingness; at four schools they are enablers for three reasons: their skills; the sustainability of using them to provide cover; and the extra involvement it gives them. This notion of enhanced planning involvement being an enabler sits in line with more recent academic literature written in the light of Remodelling, that re-examines the role of support staff. Butt and Lance (2005) report research findings that indicate the importance of greater involvement of TAs in the planning process, and its

contribution to their effectiveness. Where this current study makes a contribution is that it links that enabler to the 'effect' it gives rise to. In this case, support staff involvement with PPA cover allows teachers to plan better for them, and thus, contributes to the effect 'developing staff'.

Respondent perceptions play a key role in identifying influences, and there comes a point with some contextual influences where PPA is perceived *not* to have certain effects simply because these are perceived to arise from other areas. For example, and in apparent contradiction, certain *positive* aspects of schools (including positive, open, community oriented **cultures**; positive home school relations and high expectations of pupils; positive relationships; and staff meetings that dealt with whole-school issues) were seen as 'inhibitors' in some schools when it came to attributing particular effects to PPA. At Westfields, The Orchard and Underwood, for example, positive open cultures detracted from what PPA was seen to be able to add because communication flowed anyway. At Hall Garden and Meadows, positive cultures enhanced co-operation during PPA as teachers worked together.

In terms of **historical** influences, this study finds that **finances** have a role to play in terms of sustaining PPA (linked to the effect 'programme coherence'), bringing in quality people from outside (external support), and improving the effect 'resources'. Perception that finances are a problem does not necessarily depend upon the size of the school; more upon how aware staff are that there is a deficit budget. Existing **priorities** can inhibit what PPA is seen to be able to do. For instance, at Underwood, Assessment for Learning was already a focus, and at The Orchard, work on children's thinking skills meant PPA was not seen to bring about greater involvement on the part of children. **Size** of the school is shown to influence effects of PPA in two ways. Firstly, a theme common to smaller schools is that they have more informal conversations and require less formalisation, and teachers have more leadership responsibilities. These factors limit the extent to which PPA is seen to enhance co-ordination or leadership. Secondly, collaborative working during PPA tends to happen more in larger schools. PPA is seen to improve processes of collaborative target setting in ways that happen through other means in smaller schools. These findings suggest that in a larger school, some of the capacity-related effects of PPA may be seen more readily but it does not mean these things are not happening in smaller schools, where they tend to happen through other means.

The significance of **accommodation**, in terms of teachers having a place to work during PPA should not be underestimated. A specific PPA room enables staff to work together and to spend their time productively. Absence of space to work may mean staff have to leave the

premises, as happens on Wednesday afternoons at Meadows. This has the detrimental effect of stopping mentoring relationships and loss of all the benefits associated with collaboration. Some activities related to the twelve themes are attributed to other aspects of **school organisation** rather than to PPA at The Orchard, Underwood, and Westfields. The theme common to a number of schools is that staff meetings address issues of developing staff, collaboration on school foci, or reflection on the school's improvement agenda.

The most significant school level influence to emerge from this study is **PPA strategy**. This is discussed as a structural influence, and it concerns schools' chosen means of policy implementation. This suggests that above all other contextual factors, the way in which the policy is implemented is key to bringing about capacity-related effects. One key aspect of strategy is the **timing of PPA**. Single blocks of time are seen as beneficial at Underwood, and desirable at Hall Garden. At Hall Garden simultaneous release time contributed to collaborative planning and development of staff even though teachers were not assigned into collaborative partnerships.

The theme that emerges from this study as having most importance in relation to strategy is the use of **collaborative working** during PPA time. Where teachers have the opportunity to collaborate, this is frequently cited as a key influence on positive effects of PPA. In schools where collaborative planning took place during PPA, including The Orchard, Westfields, and Meadows, there was recognition that more school-wide planning could facilitate some of the effects (learning community and reflection) even further. Although in the couple of schools where collaboration is not an option, lack of opportunity to work together is not cited as detrimental. It should not be taken for granted, therefore, that all schools appreciate the importance of team working.

The finding that collaborative working during PPA is an important strategy reflects the capacity literature in which this study is grounded, as well as in a number of other studies. Mitchell and Sackney's (2000) notion of the 'high capacity organisation', for example, puts 'interpersonal capacity', with its inherent emphasis on collaborative practices, as a core element of its model. Newmann et al.'s (2000) 'Professional learning community' *"in which staff work collaboratively to set clear goals...assess...develop action plans...while being engaged in inquiry and problem solving"* is one of their five components of capacity, and the one that Fullan (2001b:1) proposes is a key organisational feature. One of the six 'internal conditions' identified by the IQEA research (Hopkins and Harris, 1997) is 'collaborative planning', and Harris (2001:262) writes that teacher collaboration is *"one of the most important conditions at the school level"*. Relating back to the literature on learning capacity, Child and Faulkner's (1998) work discusses the importance of collaboration on a

wider level to organisational learning. The significance of others to a person's learning is critical, and arguably, in the case of this study, a major factor in driving improvement through PPA. Child and Faulkner (1998) take for granted the presence of others in their four factors on which organisational learning depends.

To provide further evidence for the significance of collaborative working, in Westfall's (2006) study, for example, collaborative techniques are said to be linked to the improvement outcomes of desired changes in student attitude, cognition, and behaviour. There is also a developing body of literature examining the importance of collaboration on a cross-organisational scale (Sullivan et al., 2006) to development of 'collaborative capacity'. A piece of quantitative empirical research by Park et al. (2005) investigated the relationships between teamwork and teacher commitment. Their study suggested that collaborative working had potential retention implications in terms of enhancing teachers' commitment. The current study finds that one of the purposes of PPA is to enhance teacher retention. It is suggested that headteachers could potentially reap doubly by facilitating collaborative working practices as these would have benefits in terms of both retention, and PPA's capacity-related 'effects'.

11.2.3.3. Teacher influences

This study finds two key teacher-level influences, one of which is emergent, and which are supported by evidence from two or more schools. These are **experience** (which this study interpreted as relating to teacher 'role'); and the emergent theme **use of PPA time**. In terms of teachers' roles, it is found that where PPA time directly or indirectly alleviates some of the time constraints of teachers with additional leadership responsibilities, it is more often attributed to the effects of PPA, particularly reflection, learning community, and processes. It is considered that this finding arises because teachers with additional leadership roles naturally have greater volumes of work to complete, and thus, perceive time-saving benefits of PPA more keenly. The more common effect of 'role', however, is that a teacher with leadership responsibility attributes changes to that position rather than to PPA.

For the second time in this study, 'time' arises as a key finding. The first occurrence is in relation to the policy's provision of 'extra time'; the second relates to teachers' 'use of time' as an influence, and is a key contribution of this study. Use of time is recognised in the literature for example, in relation to headteachers and the obstacles to good use of time (Wilkinson, 1992); to teacher wellbeing (Bubb and Earley, 2004); or to particular processes such as development planning (Stoll and Fink, 1999) or formative assessment (Black and Wiliam, 2003), although does not tend to be prescriptive.

In the case of PPA, however, a number of activities are found to contribute to eleven of the twelve capacity-related effects of PPA (excepting human resources). By cross referencing the twelve 'effects' tables in the Cross Case chapter with one another, the activities relating to teachers' use of PPA time can be ordered in terms of the number of effects they influence (full details shown in Appendix 15). Figure 11-2 shows the series of activities found to be most significant for capacity building, with order of importance reducing further away from the centre. As a reminder, these activities are influences at *teacher* level because they reflect impacts that specific teacher activities bring to bear on PPA's capacity building effects. Figure 11-2 is reflective of Stoll, Fink and Earl's (2002:161) spider's web analogy where nine themes that *"feed and nourish"* capacity building for learning in schools are laid out as a web to represent how *"if you touch one part of it, the rest reverberates because it is all interconnected"*.

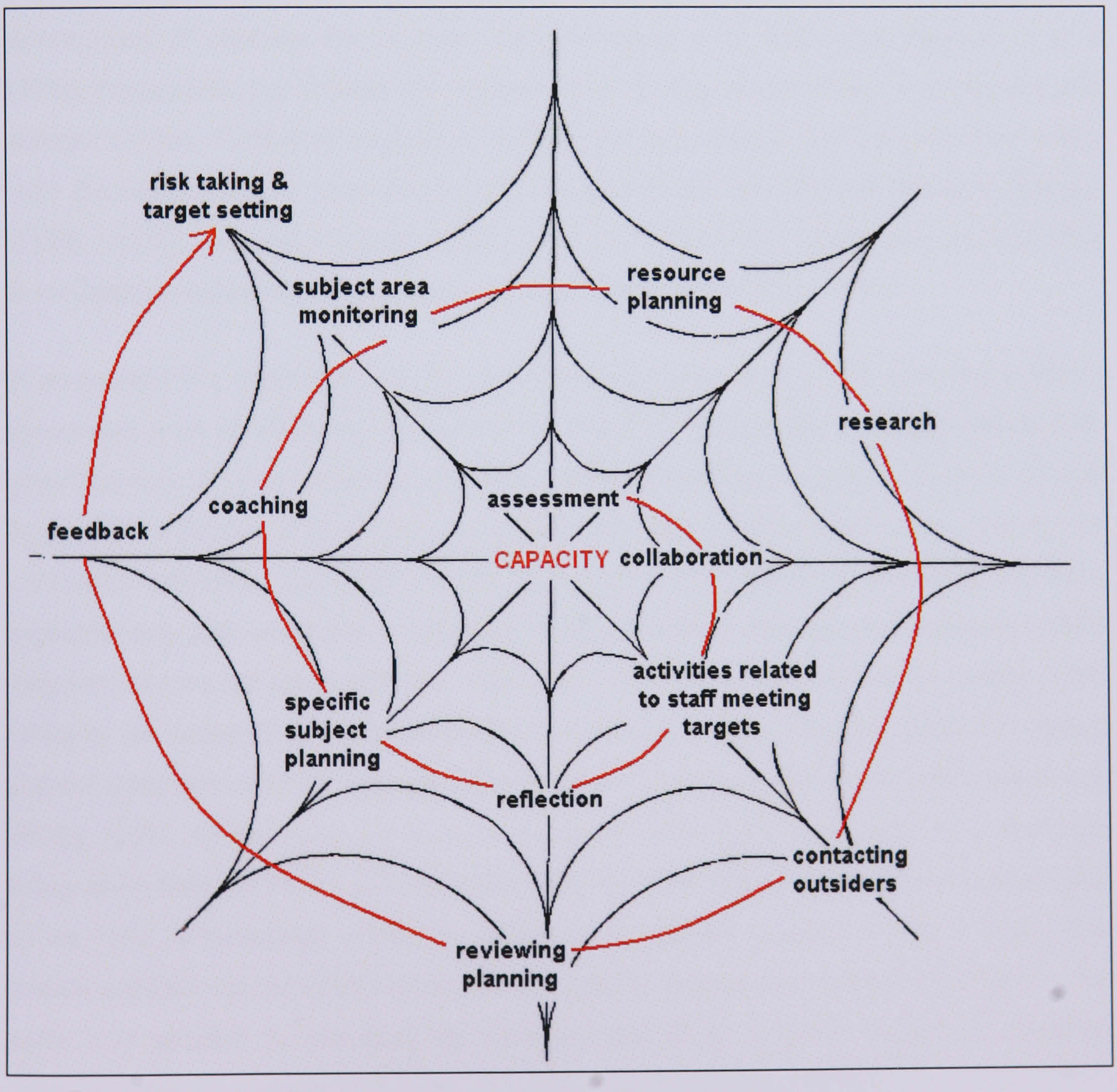

Figure 11-2 The significance of PPA time activities (a teacher-level influence) upon PPA's capacity related effects

One of the purposes of this study is to determine factors affecting the effectiveness of PPA time. In identifying these specific activities that can be associated with the twelve capacity themes, this study shows how teachers might consider spending their time if they are to reap the most benefits for their school in terms of contributing to the twelve capacity-related effects. Relating this to the literature, there is some research evidence that use of time is a significant factor in the successful restructure of schools (Fullan, 1995). A qualitative study into relatively successful restructuring of schools (Wohlstetter et al., 1994) found that in these schools focused time was devoted to the development of knowledge and skills, and the gathering and scrutiny of information. In relation to the twelve capacity-related effects examined in this study, the most significant activity is shown to be **assessment** (scrutiny of information), which is an enabler of the effects developing staff, leadership, co-ordination, reflection, programme coherence, and processes. The significance of assessment could be explained with reference to the literature relating to the internal conditions required for development of capacity. For example, both Newmann et al. (2000) and Hopkins et al.'s (1994) frameworks put forward the importance of inquiry, which relates to collection and scrutiny of data. Formative assessment has become increasingly important in recent years, with the introduction of Assessment for Learning into the new Primary National Strategy (DfES, 2004b). Several research studies have also shown the significance of formative assessment strategies to pupil learning outcomes (Black and Wiliam, 2003).

If assessment is a significant activity, not doing assessment during PPA time limits PPA's association with involvement and reflection. Likewise, time spent in **collaboration** with other teachers, be it for planning, sharing of ideas, mentoring, or other activity, is said to bring about a number of the effects, particularly developing staff, co-ordination, programme coherence, reflection, and improvements in processes. The notion of **coaching** was used synonymously with mentoring by members of the workforce, although as Clutterbuck (2003) suggests, the two are subtly different. These two activities; collaboration and coaching, both relate to the notion of professional learning community, which has been related to higher student achievement in the literature (Bolam et al., 2005, Lee and Smith, 1996, Louis and Marks, 1998). As the reader moves from the inside to the outside of Figure 11-2, activities bring about fewer of PPA's capacity-related effects. This study makes a novel contribution to the body of knowledge related to influences on internal capacity in that it shows that certain activities can be related to the twelve capacity themes more strongly than others. As such, it is possible to anticipate the activities that might be most fruitful for building capacity, either as a whole, or in terms of specific capacity-related themes.

The third appearance of 'time', as a theme for this research, concerns the sorts of time savings teachers can make depending upon how they use their time. Findings from this study generate a 'typology of time saving', the significance of which relates to the relationship between time saving, reduced stress, and enhanced retention of teachers, anticipated in policy documents relating to PPA. The typology (Figure 11-3) has implications, therefore, for any analysis of the efficacy of the policy for teacher time savings.

As detailed in section 10.3.2, a number of time-related effects, revolving around changes in efficiency and thoroughness, are attributed to PPA's provision of 'extra time'. The impacts of time upon efficiency and thoroughness were interpreted from interview data pertaining to the time savings made by teachers. This discussion will further elaborate on these time saving aspects by displaying them as a 'typology of time saving'. The discussion will argue how there is a fine line between benefits of teacher thoroughness and efficiency in terms of the time savings they can make. Bearing in mind the significance of work/life balance as a key purpose of the policy, this finding is important for practice. This typology is of practical benefit to policy makers and school leaders, who need to propose where this balance should lie. Using the nominal value +1 for an increase in efficiency or thoroughness, and -1 for a decrease in the same, the range of relationships is plotted graphically (Figure 11-3).

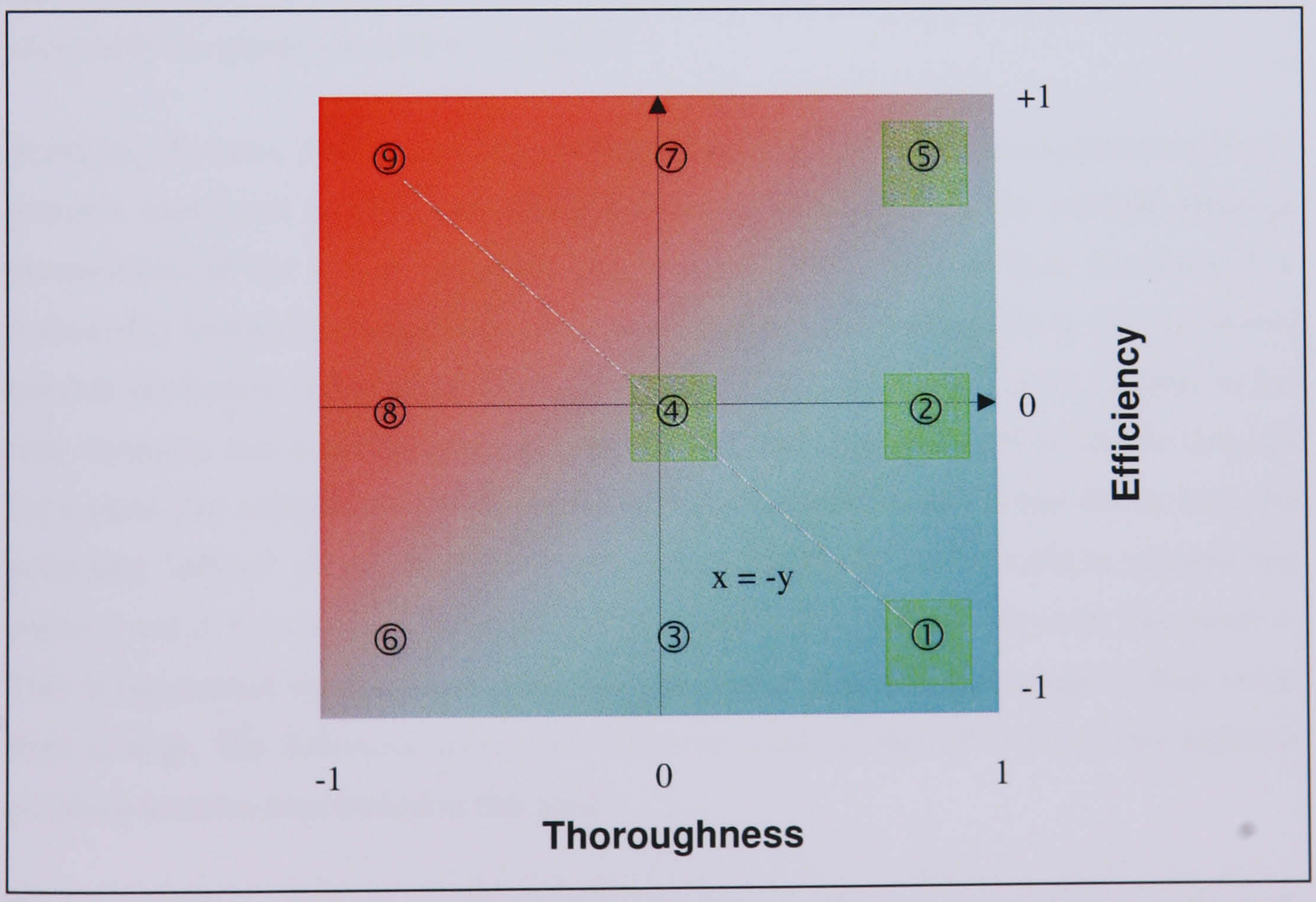

Figure 11-3 Typology of time saving

In theory, teachers can adopt any of the nine positions above, which are examined in more detail below. In practice, the most common positions teachers experienced are 1, 2, 4, and 5 (highlighted green) which, for the most part, reduce teachers' overall working weeks. Position 1 represents the greatest time saving opportunity and least effort by teachers; position 9 represents the opposite; while 4 represents something in the middle. So for example, because of PPA time, a teacher sees herself as being under less time pressure and uses the opportunity to become more thorough with her work. Because she is working in school, she finds there are more distractions from colleagues and so she becomes less efficient and so takes longer to finish her work. This teacher's experience is Position 9 and she experiences the least time saving, and possibly spends more time working. She might be putting more into her job, but there are other factors to take into account when thinking about the benefit to the school, such as her stress levels.

At the other extreme, a teacher in another school decides that as PPA is for two and a half hours only, that is how long he will allocate to his planning, and no more. He works in a room with a colleague perhaps, or has access to more resources, and finds he can get more work done in the time because these make him more efficient. But the self-imposed two and a half hour deadline means he tends to be a little less thorough with his planning than before. His experience corresponds to Position 1, which represents the greatest time saving but not necessarily the greatest benefit to the school.

In reality, of course, there are multiple factors affecting efficiency and thoroughness and so a person's experience could appear anywhere on the chart as there are multiple possible permutations of the x, y relationship. The line x = -y is drawn to show that there is a relationship between thoroughness, efficiency, time saving and effort. So as the line moves towards the bottom right corner, effort decreases and time saving increases. A guide to the time saving or loss a teacher might experience, and their associated effort, should they opt for a particular combination of thoroughness and efficiency, is that a line drawn from the point they 'choose' would bisect the x = -y chart at 90 degrees. So it could be inferred that points 2 and 3, for example, represent less time saving than point 1, but more than point 4. This is represented by a colour change from red (least time saving) through to blue (most time saving). The following paragraphs illustrate some of the efficiency / thoroughness positions teachers experienced in this study.

Position 1: More efficient, less thorough. Less time is spent on work. Work is done more efficiently and quickly to fit into the time given. As a result, work/life balance improves as working week reduces. Of all teachers interviewed, only one falls into this category: *"maybe I don't plan as thoroughly as I did when I was at home...[Now] I think "Right, if I can bash*

out my Literacy plan I can get home and do this." (2205) This position represents the greatest time saving and least effort by teachers.

Position 2: More efficient, as thorough. A number of comments from teachers show that they consider themselves to be working more efficiently in their PPA time, although they make no reference to doing work more in depth. For example: *"After school we're tired and don't want to do it...But now we've got the PPA time we're more focused on what we're supposed to be doing and we get it done quicker as well."* (1401). As a result, their working week reduces.

Position 3: As efficient, less thorough. This theoretical position reduces working week because 'less thorough' implies teachers spend less time doing the same amount of work. **Position 4: Same pace**. The same amount of time is spent on work. The only change is that work is moved from teachers' time into school time and so, overall, teachers' working week reduces. Work is done in the same way, at the same pace, and often with the same people: *"We always have worked together. We were doing exactly the same thing; we're just doing it at a different time."* (1410). This pattern improves work-life balance, but only to the extent of making a like-for-like time saving. Other effects depend upon implementation strategy and quality of reflection on the part of the teacher. An alternative scenario is that working week remains the same, which is only possible in cases when PPA is not received.

Position 5: More efficient, more thorough. The extra time is used to do work more thoroughly, and more time is spent on important tasks, which means that work is still done outside of school to an extent. However, time is used differently as 'thinking tasks' are moved to a more productive time thus improving efficiency. 'Easier' work at weekends reduces stress. For example: *"This afternoon I'll be planning...which then leaves me time at the weekend to do the nice part of preparation... And also do things for myself."* (1503). Working week is said to be reduced. An alternative scenario is that working week remains the same length but work can be managed better so that *"when you get to the weekend, although you have other things that are pressing, they can be managed slightly differently, and maybe done at slightly different times"* (2403), thus improving stress and work/life balance. It allows teachers, especially those with leadership responsibilities, *"time to do other things connected with the school"* (2403).

Position 6: Less efficient, less thorough. It can be inferred that point 6 would yield a similar range of time and effort savings to point 5: working week may be reduced or remain the same. **Position 7: As efficient, more thorough, and Position 8: Less efficient, as thorough**. It can be inferred that points 7 and 8 would yield a similar range of time and

effort losses; more than 4 but less than 9: working week may be reduced or remain the same. **Position 9: Less efficient, more thorough**. Theoretically, this position would represent the most effort and least time saving for teachers. Working week would not necessarily increase, because the 'wasted' time may not encroach onto teachers' home lives.

As discussed in the cross case analysis, PPA is perceived to be about raising standards, tackling problems of teacher shortages, and enhancing work/life balance. While some teachers saw these three as separate purposes, others recognised the links between work/life balance as a mediator of the other two. For instance, teachers at Westfields did not link PPA to standards explicitly. What this discussion of time saving actually alludes to is that the enhanced work/life balance outcomes intended to arise from this policy, and so significant to its success because of their indirect role in raising standards and tackling teacher shortages, are greatly dependent upon practice of teachers themselves. PPA has been shown to have the potential to free time for teachers, thereby reducing their working weeks but if teachers are not careful in how they use their PPA time, they may not reap the benefits of time savings. This could have knock-on effects in terms of PPA's ability to raise standards and improve recruitment and retention. It could be argued, therefore, that teachers and headteachers must aim to strike a balance between thoroughness and efficiency if they are to make PPA most effective.

11.2.3.4. Higher order influences

Besides the direct influences upon the effects of PPA, and the indirect influences found to influence PPA's effects by influencing its implementation, analysis of data (Appendix 17) leads to emergence of another type of influence. What is found is that a small number of influences actually affect other influences. In this sense, they are more than just 'indirect' influences, they are more significant because they can potentially have more impact. This study proposes these be labelled 'higher order' influences. This is a novel contribution to the literature on internal influences because it shows the interrelationships between them. Stoll (1999) alludes to the interconnectedness of the influences, suggesting that greater understanding is needed in determining how the influences relate to one another and compare in importance.

Some of the higher order influences identified by this study affect indirect influences. For example, the positive behaviour and attitudes of pupils that was attributed to enabling implementation of PPA at Meadows was influenced itself by leadership from the headteacher. In order to maintain focus on those influences that contribute to the capacity-

related effects, however, this section will focus on higher order influences that affected direct influences only.

The **size** of the school is a higher order influence in that it affects opportunities for implementing a collaborative **PPA strategy**. In the two-form entry schools (Westfields, The Orchard, and Meadows) where teachers could work together during PPA, collaborative strategy was attributed to positive capacity-related effects of PPA, as discussed previously. The headteacher at Barfields suggested smaller schools attract greater numbers of SEN pupils, which puts financial strain on schools. Although neither confirming nor denying this, research by Leithwood and Steinbach (2003) links school size to effectiveness in challenging schools. Stoll (1999) does not, in fact, mention 'size' of the school, but this study combines size with other historical factors because of the contexts in which headteachers talked about their schools; for instance, growing (Meadows) or declining (Hall Garden) over time. The evidence from this study has built up to suggest school size is significant, which links nicely back to earlier anecdotal evidence from the headteacher at Barfields based on her experiences as a Remodelling Consultant who said of PPA: *"it hits small schools very hard"*. Relating school size to the scholarly literature, there is some research to suggest smaller schools are more cost efficient, and that there may be a link between school size an student achievement (Eberts et al., 1990) but this is based in the U.S. education system, and is of limited relevance to a UK context. Research also suggests size of a school plays an important role in structuring the workplace dynamics (Stoll et al., 2006). The notion that school size might have some significance in influencing the effectiveness of PPA could provide a very fruitful avenue for investigation by subsequent studies.

Leadership is a higher order influence in that it can affect **use of PPA time**. Headteachers might provide coaching opportunities during that time (as at Barfields); might emphasize the importance of a particular activity (such as assessment at Underwood); or may provide teachers with opportunities to work alongside TAs or other colleagues. Leadership also influences **PPA strategy** in terms of the choice of cover and by designing in collaboration between teachers. With reference to the literature on capacity themes, the notion of leadership is considered to be an important *component* of capacity, as well as one of Stoll's (1999) influences. For example, one of Newmann et al's (2000:264) components is *"effective principal leadership"*; and transformational leadership emerges in other frameworks (Hopkins et al., 1994, Van den Berg and Sleegers, 1996). If leadership is a component of capacity then it seems reasonable that it may be influenced by school leadership.

Relating these specific means through which this research found leadership to influence capacity, this study broadens its scope to other literature. A systematic review of fifteen years of evidence across all types of schools (Hallinger and Heck, 1998) concluded the effects of school leadership on pupil outcomes are significant, although indirect, but that the means by which impact are achieved are not fully understood. It also proposes there are several paths beginning to describe the means by which school leadership influences learning outcomes. These included school goals, school structure, social networks, people, and organisational culture. Shaping the school's direction (thorough mission, vision and goals) emerged as a primary avenue of influence. The finding that leadership is a higher order influence, i.e., it influences other influences, would fit with the notion of 'mediated models' of leadership that suggest the effects of leaders on students are indirect and that leaders act in ways that create collaborative cultures, for example (Leithwood and Steinbach, 2003).

Mix of pupils as a higher order influence is seen to affect choice of **PPA strategy**. Where pupils are adaptable to change, headteachers have more flexibility in choosing strategy. Where pupils are likely to be more unsettled by change or where there are behavioural problems, headteachers may be more restricted in their choices, such as at Hall Garden. This may have its positive side too, however, if the strategy adopted (such as using TAs already in the school, who know the children) turns out to be more sustainable than other options.

The school's **financial situation** arose as a higher order influence, although this is an interesting and controversial finding. As an inhibitor, lack of better funding for PPA may limit options for **cover strategy**, with some schools having to take an evolutionary approach (such as Westfields and Hall Garden) and tending to use existing TAs to provide cover. At Westfields and Hall Garden, most teachers do not feel TAs actively enhance quality of learning. The ethics of employing TAs to take whole classes for little additional financial reward is questioned by staff elsewhere as well (particularly at The Orchard), and there are newspaper articles to be found addressing the issue of stakeholders unhappy with the thought of unqualified teachers taking classes (e.g. McCormack, 2005, Clare, 2006). In support of this finding, the necessity for funding is something that cropped up as a success factor in a project relating to implementation of an improvement programme at a school in the U.S. (Stoll et al., 1997). In an ideal world, the 'bigger picture' PPA fits into would not require headteachers to invest time and energy developing support staff in order to raise standards because finances would allow for the bringing in of high quality teachers. But, as pointed out by the headteacher at The Orchard *"that was never the intention of PPA, because there was never ever going to be the budget for it to happen"* (2400). With this in mind, the most

sustainable option is for headteacher to develop what they already have in their schools. Recognising that limitless budget is simply not an option, Hartle and Hobby (2003:383) agree that in the current resource-constrained context, *"we will not be able to raise standards simply through greater investment"*.

Funding as a higher order influence masks an important finding, therefore, which is that use of TAs resulting from lack of funding potentially has its positive side too, as already alluded to above. As addressed in the cross case analysis, additional responsibility may enhance the commitment and confidence of TAs, may minimise disruption and change, and may enhance sustainability of the strategies in these schools. This may be outweighed by the negativity from teachers, however, which is why it is important that the value of support staff as cover is recognised, starting with headteachers. Overall, the issue of the significance of finances is a complex one. It seems there is a balance to strike between developing existing TA capacity, and ensuring the quality of teaching does not fall unacceptably during PPA time, as was seen to be the case at Westfields and Hall Garden, in some instances.

Relating back to the academic literature; of Stoll's (1999) twenty-two influences on internal conditions, this study finds evidence of only four that impact upon others. These higher order influences are the size of the school, leadership, the mix of pupils, and the school's financial situation. Interestingly although they influence both teacher- and school-level influences, all four are school-level influences, suggesting the significance of the school-level to capacity building in the context of policy implementation. These four influences are the key factors that govern how PPA is implemented and to a great extent, what happens during it. While empirical research in school effectiveness has shown *"the classroom level is more important for learning and outcomes than other levels in education"* (Creemers, 1994:5), as Wallace (2002:164) argues, the importance of leadership and management is sufficiently significant that it is a factor *"we can ill afford to neglect."*. Indeed, approaches to school improvement should look beyond focusing solely on classroom behaviour to ensuring consistency of, and support for, good practice throughout the school if all pupils are to benefit (Hopkins and Levin, 2000). Now that this research has been able to narrow down which are the higher order influences, future research could examine higher order influences further by asking more focused questions. These four higher order influences are novel in that they have not been linked together in the literature in a way that suggests they are more significant than other influences.

11.2.3.5. Summary of influences on effects

The discussion in this section has found that influences upon the capacity-related effects of PPA are, on the whole, consistent with Stoll's (1999) framework. A key contribution of this study is that it relates specific influences to internal capacity through their relationship with the twelve themes, providing empirical evidence that a number of influences can be linked to internal capacity. These influences are: political will to maintain a policy; policy details themselves; external pressure; cultural openness and positivity; historical: size, priorities, and finances; support staff as a means of implementing policy; structural: accommodation, school organisation, and strategy implementation; role of teachers; and teachers' use of PPA time. Empirical findings indicate a number of emergent influences, however, and sub-themes emergent from the data expand each of Stoll's themes. The key emergent themes are (1) inherent policy details; and (2) teachers' use of their PPA time. Time is found to be a recurrent theme in this study, arising in relation to inherent policy details (see Table 11-1), teachers' use of time (Figure 11-2), and potential time savings associated with PPA (Figure 11-3 Typology of time saving). This study also proposes that 'external pressure' and 'external support' be added to Stoll's (1999) model more explicitly.

Some of the 'influences' potentially hold more significance to capacity building than do others, as they are found to affect other influences. This study proposes these influences be referred to as 'higher order influences'. The influences are leadership, mix of pupils, finances, and school size. All four bear impact upon PPA itself, whether in terms of teachers' use of time, or in terms of the strategy implemented.

A summary diagram is used to illustrate direct, indirect, and higher order influences at each level.

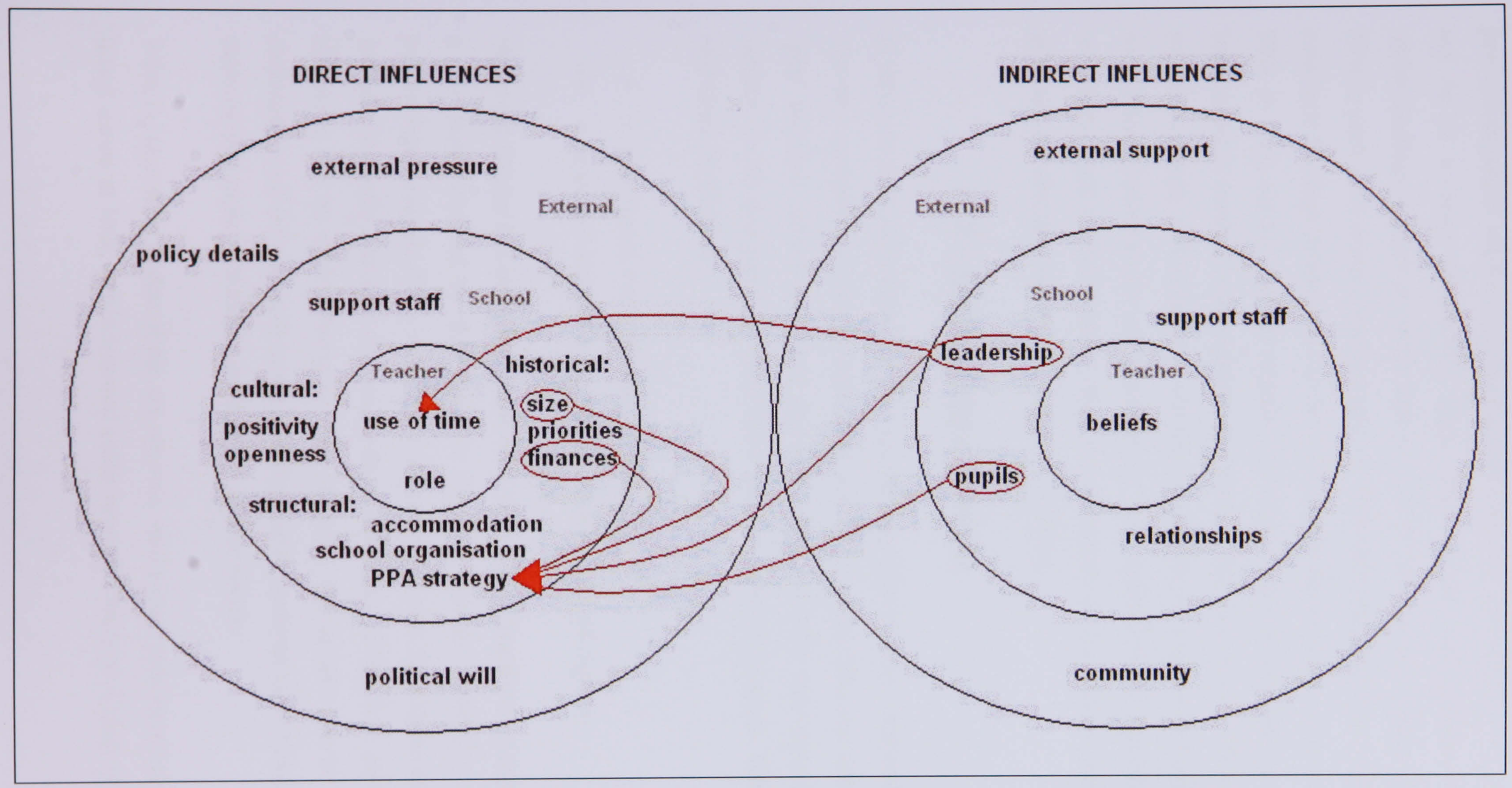

Figure 11-4 Direct and indirect influences. Higher order influences circled in red

11.3. What is capacity?

Given that this is an interpretive study, and is based on perception and interpretation, teacher perceptions about what constitutes capacity building are assigned a significance they would not be in a more positivistic study. The current study allows for development of understandings *in light of,* rather than in spite of, teacher perceptions. As discussed already, PPA is seen to be about capacity building. This understanding (see section 11.1) is based on empirical findings relating to (a) the relationship between the twelve capacity themes and PPA in each school; (b) the relationship between the twelve effects of PPA, and school improvement needs; (c) perceptions about the likely outcomes of PPA, framed in terms of existing capacity definitions; and (d) perceptions about whether PPA builds capacity. Added to this understanding now are practitioners' own definitions of capacity building, and these are related back to the literature chapter; particularly to the debates identified relating to the purpose and operationalisation of capacity building.

11.3.1. Perspectives of capacity

In terms of defining a school with 'capacity for improvement', respondents' definitions fell into two metaphorical camps (and some into both): those who saw capacity as signifying a 'gap' between current and ideal practice; and those who saw capacity as signifying the 'ability' to fill that gap. The latter view had the most proponents. This study proposes the two views be labelled:

- a 'gap'-based view of capacity; and
- a 'resource'-based (or 'capability'-based) view of capacity.

While the former has less in common with the existing literature on capacity, it is useful that it has been revealed by this research for two reasons. Firstly, it serves to show how practitioner understandings can be significantly different from those of academics or policy makers. Secondly, through addressing the weaknesses of the first, particularly its inference that there can be such a thing as 'full' capacity, the second can be understood far more thoroughly and this research makes a contribution in terms of explaining the links between capacity and capacity building in the wider public sector.

What is interesting is that of the six schools, views were split between 'gap' and 'resource'-based views at four; at Underwood (who recently obtained Category One status) only the

resource-based view was expressed, and at Hall Garden (recently out of special measures) only the gap-based view was expressed, which highlights how context may affect understanding of capacity. Both gap- and resource-based views are useful conceptualisations and can be used in developing an understanding of capacity building. A 'gap'-based view of capacity implies that there are identifiable gaps between current and 'ideal' performance, which corresponds to the experience of teachers at Hall Garden. Staff at this school identify 'capacity' with room for improvement, perhaps because this is how they see their school. The presence of capacity represents a space, or opportunity to develop abilities or activities, such as teamworking or curriculum that, if in place will lead to an 'improved' school. In suggesting *how* PPA fills gaps, respondents make reference to *what* these gaps are, each listing some of the factors they identify with capacity for improvement. For example, they identify gaps in efficiency, effectiveness, activities, teaching and learning, training, planning quality, expectation of pupils, curriculum, standards, achievement, attainment, abilities, team-working, and levels of responsibility.

The gap-based view of capacity relates to the framework of twelve themes identified in the literature, in that some of the sorts of gaps identified might be linked back to the capacity themes examined by this study. Expectation of pupils, for example, fits the theme 'developing staff' ; curriculum, with the theme 'resources' (Newmann et al., 2000). As with those frameworks identified from the literature in Table 2-1, and which suggested capacity comprises certain results or performance of certain activities, inherent in this gap-based view is the notion that fulfilling capacity involves the prerequisite possession of certain capabilities. In this sense, the twelve capacity themes can be seen as those capabilities, and individual schools will have 'gaps' in different areas. So staff at Meadows, for example, do not perceive 'leadership' as being an important area for improvement, but they do recognise the importance, for their school, of developing a stronger learning community (Table 13-7). Under the 'gap'-based view, they have a 'gap' in the area of learning community that must be filled before they are 'at capacity'. This gap-based view is problematic, however, because it appears to conflict with the 'lean' philosophy concept that *"there is always a need for continuous improvement"* (Alukal, 2006). A logical conclusion of the gap-based view might be that once all these twelve aspects are in place (and perhaps others not accounted for yet; and perhaps not all twelve might be critical in all circumstances), a school has the full *potential* to improve (rather than it has fully improved). Even this notion is problematic, however, because (a) defining when an organisation has reached full *potential* to improve is difficult, if not impossible, and (b) the notion of full potential is as questionable as the notion that an organisation can reach a point where it can no longer improve.

The gap-based view brings to mind the necessity of obtaining tools to improve. It also appears to fit quite closely with the IQEA notion of six conditions *"that support and sustain improvement"* (Harris and Hopkins, 2000:10), and indeed, the other six capacity-related themes, in that possession of these sorts of capabilities allow organisations to reach their potential for maximum improvement.

The resource-based view leads to an alternative understanding of what it might mean to have capacity. As with the 'gap'-based view it also shares commonalities with understandings of capacity in the literature. For example, Rashman et al.'s (2006:26) understanding that *"organizational capacity is the content (e.g. structures, systems, culture) that the organization possesses ..."* brings to mind both resources and capabilities an organisation has. Rather than needing certain tools to improve, inherent in the resource-based view is the notion that a school with capacity has the tools for improvement already in place. Under this definition capacity is not the gap itself, but the ability to fill that gap through engaging certain resources. Capacity building would relate to the development of these resources. The sorts of resources mentioned by members of the workforce as holding significance can be mapped onto the twelve themes, as a form of triangulation, to show which were considered important when left to create their own understandings:

Capacity theme	Tool / capability / resource that will contribute to improvement
Developing staff	Skills and potential of staff; Teaching quality
Involvement	
Leadership	Reflective analytical leadership team; Leadership vision; Desire and willingness to improve; Pastoral care; Ethos; Openness to change.
Co-ordination	
Reflection	Reflective analytical leadership team
Collaborative planning	Opportunities for children to develop
Learning community	
Programme coherence	
Resources	Physical resources; Finances; Time
External support	Supportive governors; Supportive parents; Inputs from external people
Processes	
Human resources	Motivated staff; Desire and willingness to improve

Table 11-2 Mapping workforce perceptions of tools needed onto the 12 capacity themes

While not discounting those of the twelve themes that do not fit with resources mentioned by members of the workforce, Table 11-2 serves to link interview findings back to the literature to provide support for a number of the themes. It shows that that the workforce perceive a number of tools / capabilities / resources to be significant to developing capacity for improvement, and it can be seen from Table 11-2 that these fit within the capacity-themes developing staff, leadership, reflection, collaborative planning, resources, external support, and human resources. What is interesting is the way in which members of the workforce chose their own language to describe their understandings of capacity for improvement, and most chose to talk in terms of resources, implicitly. The head at Underwood, for example, listed a number of resources a school with potential to improve would have, including a reflective, analytical leadership team, as shown in Table 11-2. Table 11-2 and its analysis provides triangulatory evidence that resources are an integral part of capacity: implicit in both the existing literature, through the research findings linking PPA to the twelve themes, and in asking for teachers' own definitions.

The 'resource'-based view (RBV) brings to mind the field of 'resource-based theory' because of its focus on things the organisation has that bring it benefits. The notion of the RBV is discussed in the literature in terms of the impact of resources on profitability (Schneider and Lieb, 2004), through taking advantage of changing conditions (Pettus, 2001), and creating strategic 'fit' between an organisation's resources and its environment (Herremans and Isaacs, 2004). In contrast to external perspectives that identify environmental threats and opportunities, resource-based theory is an internal perspective of the firm's ability to achieve and sustain competitive advantage over time (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000, Teece et al., 1997, Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). Penrose's (1959) seminal work on RBV emphasised the internal resources of a firm as being that which create competitive advantage. The RBV is very much aimed at private sector organisations, emphasising the value of unique (valuable, rare, inimitable, non-substitutable) resources for achievement of sustainable competitive advantage (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000, Teece et al., 1997).

Work on the RBV has developed – mainly due to criticisms that it is conceptually vague and tautological, and does not pay attention to the mechanisms by which resources contribute competitive advantage (Williamson, 1999, Priem and Butler, 2001) – through attention on the dynamic capabilities required for firms to sustain competitive advantage in situations of unpredictable, rapid change. Dynamic capabilities are those organisational and strategic routines by which managers alter their resource base; that is, by which they acquire and assimilate resources, to generate new value-creating strategies (Grant, 1996, Pisano, 1994). These dynamic capabilities relate to this research's understanding of capacity by helping to

differentiate between resources and capabilities, as this discussion will highlight as it progresses. For example, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000:1116) propose that dynamic capabilities are not vague, but *"consist of many well known processes such as alliancing, product development, and strategic decision making...whose strategic value lies in their ability to manipulate resources into value-creating strategies"*. Overall, they suggest dynamic capabilities are best conceptualised as tools that manipulate resource configurations. Teece et al. (1997:515) propose that they adapt, integrate, and reconfigure both internal and external *"skills, resources, and functional competencies"* to match the requirements of a changing environment. In a public sector context, the demands of the changing environment could perhaps be likened to the demands of new improvement policies and initiatives.

Although predominantly a feature of private sector and strategy literature, and aimed at developing competitive advantage rather than capacity for improvement, the body of work on dynamic capabilities sheds some light onto differences in understanding between capabilities and resources, as these are not seen as the same in the RBV. Dynamic capabilities help to explain the subtle differences between capacity frameworks in Table 2-1. In order to align private sector and public sector understandings, it would help if common language was used when referring to either 'resources' or 'capabilities', as it now becomes clear that they are not synonymous.

The notion of resources as significant possessions of an organisation is common to the public sector as well as to firms. Although the language used to expound RBV may vary between private and public sector, the need for public services to develop strategy in a changing environment remains essentially the same as for private firms, evident in public sector rhetoric and reforms (Dereli, 2003). The focus on resources in the public sector can be seen by returning to this study's review of the existing literature on public sector capacity frameworks. Some frameworks see resources as a core aspect of capacity at both system, entity, and individual level (UNDP, 1998, Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995). Some put forward frameworks of capabilities that are required in order to develop capacity (Honadle, 1981). These sorts of capabilities are in effect derived from resources the organisation possesses. Using the literature of dynamic capabilities to frame understanding here: the capabilities are the *"tools that manipulate resource configurations"* (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000:1118).

Some of those which take an implicit resource-based view are Newmann et al. (2000) and Van den Berg and Sleegers (1996) within the field of school improvement, who identify sets of capabilities necessary for developing capacity for improvement or innovation,

respectively. These capabilities include technical resources, programme coherence, professional learning community, knowledge, skills and dispositions of staff, leadership, school context, and collaborative working (although Newmann et al.'s (2000) 'technical resources' is more a resource than a capability). The OPDM (2003) also identifies six key areas to focus on in developing capacity, which include finances, systems, processes, people, skills, knowledge, and behaviour. Unlike Newmann et al. (2000) and Van den Berg and Sleegers' (1996) frameworks, these point more to the specific resources an organisation has, rather than how to develop them for capacity creation. For example, while 'people' (ODMP, 2003) is a resource; it could be argued that 'professional learning community' (Newmann et al., 2000) is more a capability than a resources, because it speaks of what can be done with that resource (people) to create capacity. The idea of training members of the workforce to develop capacity is mentioned in interview at both Hall Garden and The Orchard.

Increasingly, key resources for all organisations are said to amount to the Intellectual Capital available (Herremans and Isaacs, 2004, Wall, 2005); to which Porter (1991) would refer as an 'intangible' resource. These sorts of intangible resources correspond to the resource gaps seen in the context of this study, such as time, skills and potential of staff, motivation, teamworking and networks, open ethos and co-operation, awareness of 'gaps' in teaching and learning, and enhanced mental capacity of teachers, as highlighted by respondents in all schools, with the exception of Hall Garden. The 'resource'-based view of capacity suggests that a capacity building initiative (of which PPA is an example) helps to develop these resources, tools, attitudes, and capabilities necessary for improvement through the capabilities represented by the twelve capacity-related themes. In the case of PPA, capacity was built through ten of the twelve themes (not including leadership and involvement).

The notion of capabilities suggests that the twelve themes relate to capacity because they focus on capabilities that lead to improvement. All twelve have been shown to lead to improvement, either through existing studies such as the IQEA research (Hopkins and Harris, 1997), or through perceptions of teachers examined in this study. While they can, therefore, be considered to be capacity themes, this does not preclude the existence of other themes not yet identified by the literature or this research.

11.3.2. Defining capacity building

From a gap-based perspective, 'capacity' represents a 'gap' between an organisation's current potential to improve, and its 'full' potential to improve (and the concept of full capacity is problematic in practice because it could be argued it is indefinable). This suggests there is also a gap in how an organisation currently performs in a range of aspects, and where

it would like to be. For a policy designed to increase this capacity to improve, its implementation would aim to narrow this gap. In theory, once this gap is filled, an organisation could do nothing else to enhance its potential to improve because, by definition, there is no remaining capacity gap. This is a theoretical argument, however, because the concept of full capacity is clearly problematic in practice.

There is no reason to suggest a school, or other organisation, could not, hypothetically be in this position of having no 'capacity' (i.e. no gap, and the full *potential* to improve), and such an organisation would be able to improve in areas as it is required to, or desires to. Here, we would naturally be inclined to say *"because it has the capacity"*, but this is a logical contradiction, because under the 'gap' perspective, the organisation with the least capacity is the one that has the greatest potential to improve, and it is fairly implicit that this would also be the one with the smallest need to improve. The 'gap' perspective treats the notion of 'capacity' as something that must be *minimised*, which is one of the logical problems of the notion of capacity as it is commonly used to refer to something an organisation must *'have'* (e.g. Morgan, 1993, Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995) rather than something it must *avoid*.

An organisation with zero capacity under this 'gap' perspective has filled its capacity gap and so is ready to improve to its full potential. This view of capacity is a bit of a 'black box' scenario in that it does not account for the process by which this gap is filled. It is, therefore, of limited use. For instance, instead of using the term capacity to describe *how* an organisation is able to improve, under the 'gap' perspective, the term 'capacity' is assigned already to the 'gap' rather than the *process* of filling it. The 'gap'-based perspective suggests all organisations have room to improve but that they might not have the ability; hence the 'gap'. As argued by five respondents – there is always another improvement to make, or another improvement initiative to implement, although clearly the level of improvement possible will vary from one organisation to another because each comes from a different starting point.

Another problem of this view of capacity relates to agency of the organisation. For example, the 'gap' view implies capacity might theoretically be reduced to zero but should multiple improvement requirements be enforced on the organisation and it no longer has the means to deal with all of them, its capacity gap increases. This gives a rather pessimistic view of an organisation's capacity because capacity can suddenly be altered by forces external to the organisation. Similarly, a new initiative or focus may capture people's attention so that areas that were improving well may *"drop off the map"* (James, Head at Westfields) leading to fluctuations in capacity. This perspective is conceptually the least useful of the two views

because it does not focus on how to close that gap, and does not allow control on the part of the organisation.

This research interprets evidence of the perceptions of the workforce to arrive at a far more satisfactory view of capacity; and one that avoids the logical problems associated with the 'gap'-based perspective. It finds that from a resource-based perspective, an organisation with 'capacity' has the necessary resources to improve. There is still a gap between where it is and where it would like to be, in terms of improvements it would like to make, but it has the necessary 'capacity' to make these improvements. 'Capacity' is, therefore, something the organisation will seek to maximise, which sits in line with understandings in the literature (see frameworks in Table 2-1).

In contrast to the 'gap'-based perspective, under the resource-based perspective, it is most likely that the organisation with the most capacity to improve is also the one that needs it least. Unlike the gap-based perspective, the resource based view accounts for the means by which an organisation maximises its improvement, by suggesting it is about developing resources / tools / capabilities. There is still something inherently unsatisfactory about the concept, however, which is that capacity *for improvement* is still vague in any meaningful, measurable sense of the word. As Cohen (1993:1) suggested, capacity is about the ability of an individual to perform a functional task *"the measure of which is usually described in terms of "capability": ability, competence, and efficiency"*. What is unsatisfactory about capacity *for improvement* is that it is generally intangible (particularly in a service environment) and is only known by its fruits: an organisation cannot know it has capacity to improve until it has improved. Even if improvement arises, however, issues of attribution problematise linking improvement to certain capabilities or activities, as discussed in the literature review chapter.

The term 'capacity' does not make sense in isolation because an organisation has 'capacity *for something*'; for *improvement*, or more precisely *capacity to meet its improvement objectives*, as is implicit in the notion of having the resources *for improvement*. As discussed in the literature debating the purpose of capacity, this is an initial functional definition of capacity: *having the resources to meet improvement objectives*, which implicitly incorporates both output and support goals of an organisation (section 2.6.2). This ties in with Grindle and Hilderbrand's (1995) and also Milèn's definition of capacity, given in chapter 2 as *"an ability to perform the defined functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably so that the functions contribute to the mission, policies and strategic objectives of the team, organisation and...system."* (2001:4). Under this initial functional definition, 'capacity building' is, therefore, the *process* of developing the resources necessary to meet

improvement objectives. It is a transient phase through which organisations develop capacity to meet improvement objectives. Ergo, capacity is the end result. As an end goal, 'capacity', now with inbuilt notions of 'meeting improvement objectives' removes the need for vague notions of 'having the capacity to do *something*' (see section 2.8).

A definitional issue remains in terms of the nature of *improvement objectives*; and this study contributes to understanding here also. Firstly, while this study shows the exact nature of improvement requirements to be context dependent, there are similarities in understanding across schools. As shown in the cross case analysis, a key improvement objective is the ability to *sustain improvement*; and interpretation of data suggests that this is possible when the potential benefits of resources are maximised. Relating this to the literature, Harrow (2001:219) links new public management to capacity building with the suggestion that governments are trying to *"do things better with fewer resources"*, with the implication being that this must be done through capacity building. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) suggest that resource constraints are one factor that has led to the requirement to develop capacity for improvement through the new paradigm of school improvement. In terms of research findings, teachers talked about obtaining more from the existing resource base in order to continue to improve: *"being as efficient as they could be"* (2100); *"managing the money side of things"* (2304); *"maximising every opportunity"* (2305).

Interpretation of data suggests maximising existing resources may also require improvements in other resources, as this arose in several comments. For example: *"we've got the space but not really the resources to be able to use it"* (2304); *"it's got the staff in place, but they probably need a bit more training"* (2202); *"staff needing extra training"* (2204); and *"[we have the] abilities; we need to...have the time and resources to do it"* (2409). This brings to mind the notion of capabilities discussed earlier, as the ability to manipulate these resources for their best use. While these capabilities could be seen as resources also, they have a process element that makes it useful to separate them out from the other resources, hence their labelling as capabilities.

Taking these understandings into account, capacity, which was defined initially as *having the resources to meet improvement objectives*, can now be understood as *the possession of resources necessary to sustain continuous improvement effort, and the ability to maximise their benefits through organisational capabilities*. The notion of continuous improvement as used here is consistent with existing literature on the subject. It involves changing in line with organisational goals in such a way that is designed for continuity (Lillirank et al., 2001). It is contrasted with breakthrough improvement (Moore, 2005, Slack and Lewis, 2002), or innovation (Hartley, 2005:31), because *"changes do not individually constitute innovation in*

that they are not sufficiently large, general or durable as new improvements". This research finds the ability to sustain continuous improvement to be mediated by a process of maximising the benefits of resources (ensuring they are used both efficiently and effectively), and this in itself is part of an organisation's capacity, as shown by the model below, where two components of capacity are identified as: input capacity (resources); and process capacity (capabilities).

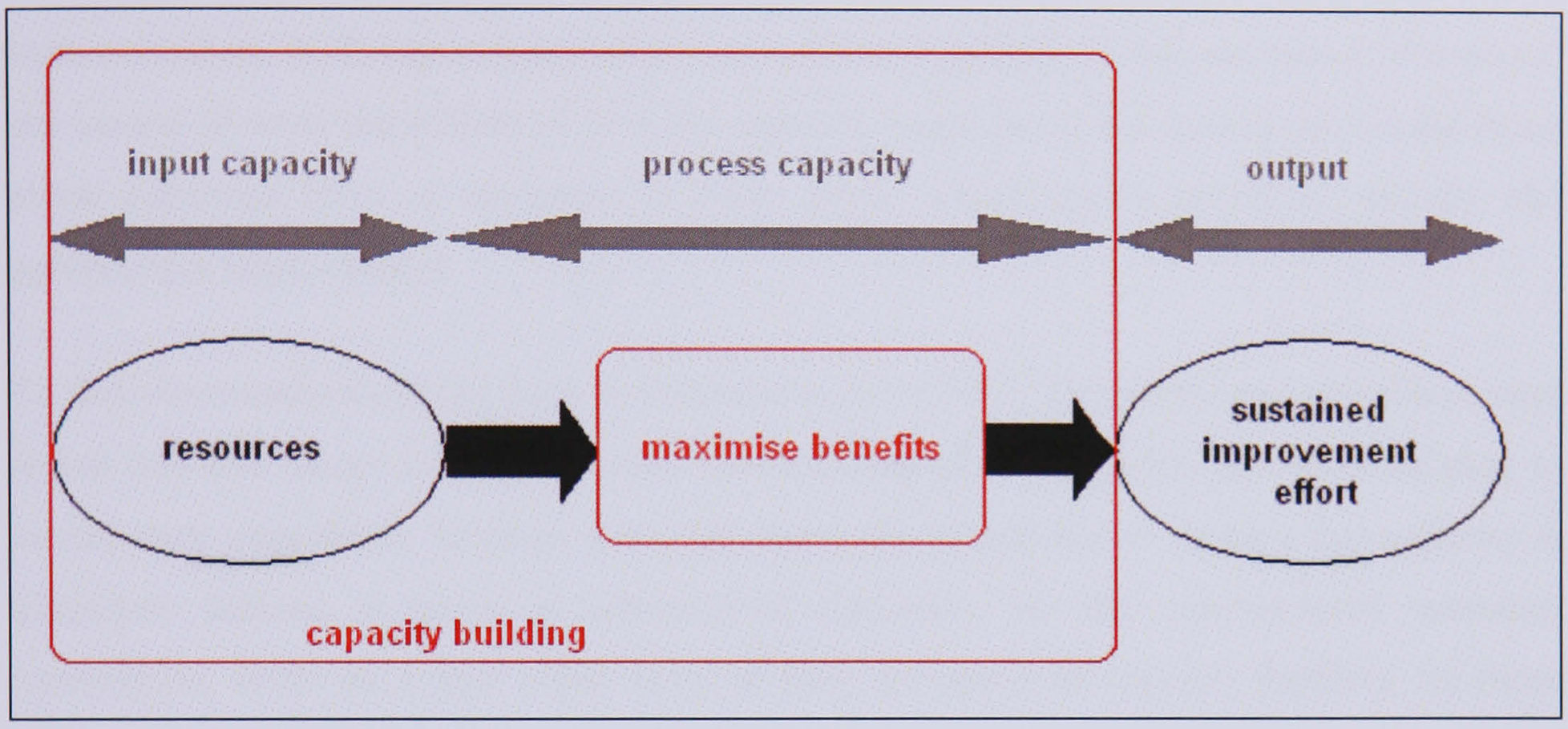

Figure 11-5 Capacity and capacity building

'Maximisation of benefits' and 'capacity building' are both processes, as indicated in the model by red boxes. From the model, capacity building is seen to be *the process of developing the resources necessary to meet improvement objectives, and of maximising the benefits of those resources through organisational capabilities*. While the *process* element of the model is the key aspect, the output requires some clarification. The notion of improvement is used in the literature in conjunction with the notion of capacity *for improvement* where there is the assumption that if a school has capacity for sustained improvement, improvement will necessarily follow. This is built into Hopkins et al.'s (1994) framework, as one example, through the assumption that possession of six key management arrangements will lead to improvement. It is considered by this study that the notion of capacity for sustained improvement *effort* may be a more appropriate phrase, and one which overcomes the potential weaknesses of assumptions that link capacity for improvement with actual improvement. The notion of *actual* improvement is then placed beyond the scope of this study.

Beyond defining capacity building, it is further considered that at any given resource level, optimum capacity for any organisation would be the point above which improvement was unsustainable because the benefits of those resources are already maximised, and, as quoted

above, a focus on too many initiatives causes others to 'drop off the map'. At any point between 'capacity' and 'optimum capacity' an organisation has the necessary resources to improve and must seek to maximise their benefits. To obtain above optimum capacity an organisation requires investment of external resources beyond its current resource base. Optimum capacity is, therefore, a dynamic concept because resources come and go. If people are resources, an example of this is that since conducting fieldwork, only two of the six staff interviewed at Hall Garden are still present, and three of the six headteachers interviewed have moved on. A change in leadership is an unknown quantity (hence teachers at Westfields are unsure of what the effects of PPA on capacity might be in the future), and could bring about enhanced level of resources in other areas, which boosts optimum capacity and potential for improvement.

To link these understandings back to Hadfield et al.'s (2002) suggestion that definitions tend to fall into two camps (those relating to teacher/individual capacities, and those relating to school-wide capacities); findings from this study are interpreted to suggest that capacity is ultimately defined in terms of school-level outcomes, but that teacher-level outcomes (motivation, skills etc.) play a part also, as they are *inputs* to capacity building for these school-level outcomes.

The implications of these findings relate to fact that when seeking to develop capacity, it is critical to target those specific resources and capabilities that impact upon capacity. Hopkins and Levin's (2000) comment that *"reform efforts have not paid sufficient attention to issues of implementation"* alludes to the current policy problem that instead of focusing on building capacity for improvement of pupil learning (or whatever else reflects a public organisation's overarching purpose), reforms often focus on other aspects that bear little impact upon this overall goal. Focus on capacity building; developing those resources and capabilities that drive the sorts of capacity themes examined by this research, and the rest will follow.

11.3.3. Summary of findings relating to defining capacity

Findings indicate that capacity is perceived in terms of two perspectives. The first relates to a 'gap'-based view; the second to a 'resource'-based view of capacity: capacity represents either a gap, or an ability to fill that gap, respectively. The second perspective is conceptually the most useful. The gap can be filled through possession of resources, and through the utilisation of those resources through organisational capabilities.

'Capacity' can be understood as: the possession of resources necessary to sustain continuous improvement effort, and the ability to maximise their benefits. 'Capacity

building' can be understood as: the process of developing the necessary resources to meet improvement objectives, and of maximising the benefits of those resources through organisational capabilities.

12. Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusions of this study. The aims of this chapter are to: (1) briefly summarise the approach taken to exploration of the relationship between context and capacity themes; (2) clarify the contribution to knowledge made by this study; (3) summarise the limitations of the study; and (4) provide recommendations for future research.

12.1. Introduction

This study began by setting out the initial rationale for the research, highlighting the significance attached to capacity building as an activity for developing improvement in all areas of the public sector. In particular it is said to be the way forward for improvement in the field of Education (Hargreaves, 2001, Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001, Stoll, 1999), which is used as the field in which these concepts are explored. As highlighted in chapter 2, the range of understandings of 'capacity' and 'capacity building' mean definition and clarity of the concept remains problematic.

Alongside this, there remain gaps in the knowledge relating to *how* organisations create the capacity that enables them to improve. In particular this study proposed to explore the relationship between context and the capacity themes highlighted by the literature review in chapter 2. Through this review the notion of internal conditions was brought to light; those *"features of schools which build capacity for change and development"* (Harris, 2001:262), as well as a number of other conditions which, combined, formed a framework of twelve 'capacity themes' through which to examine the notion of capacity. Stoll's (1999:509) notion of influences on internal capacity forms a second conceptual framework for this research. These influences are said to *"influence the school's readiness for change"* by impacting upon a school's internal capacity. Yet there is a lack of empirical evidence offering insight into *how* these influences relate to the internal conditions, and to one another, and so whether they are all equally appropriate as influences on internal capacity.

Designing a case study based piece of research to be approached qualitatively and analysed interpretatively allowed an exploratory approach to be taken to examining these internal conditions and their influences. The context chosen as most suitable for this study was the implementation of a particular piece of government policy in schools, PPA time, which provided a unique opportunity to examine the same capacity building initiative implemented across a number of schools in order to explore how contextual influences affected perceptions of internal capacity. This study has not aimed to be a critique of the policy itself.

This would form a substantial piece of work in its own right because of the complexity of PPA's effects. Instead, this study takes an exploratory approach to examining how PPA leads to the capacity effects it is perceived to, in order to develop understandings of capacity.

12.2. Contribution to new knowledge

The primary theoretical objective of this study was to *develop an understanding of the concepts of 'capacity' and 'capacity building' in the public sector, and to explore how capacity is built.* This was to be done in particular by exploring the relationships between twelve capacity-related themes, and the framework of influences on internal capacity. As demonstrated in chapter 3 this was carried out using six in-depth case studies. Using findings from these cases, as well as from a cross-case analysis, a discussion was constructed to contribute to understanding of how capacity is built in schools. Each of the six cases, as well as the combination of evidence, contribute to the scholarly literature in a range of ways, and with varying degrees of novelty.

Arguably, the concept of external validity has been a major barrier to doing case studies, with critics stating that single cases offer a poor base for generalising (Yin, 1994). By conducting interpretive research across as many as six cases this research has looked for patterns that can provide guidance to practitioners and policy makers. Although reliability is, to a great extent, hard to achieve because of the way in which findings are open to subjective interpretation by the researcher, a clear and detailed audit trail shows the process that has been followed in order to make each judgement, so the research has confidence in the dependability (extent to which the research process is systematic, rigorous, and well documented) of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Further, because of the subjective nature of interactions between the researcher and the researched, the value of findings results from their degree of credibility to those with an interest in the area of research (Noke, 2006).

The area of enquiry for this study reflected a recent government policy that schools had to adopt and implement over the period of research. From a practitioner point of view, this research has generated significant interest, ranging from headteachers, to the Local Authority, to the Training and Development Agency for Schools itself. Findings have been validated by senior managers at each of the institutions under study, and evaluated as being very closely reflective of the situation at each, as well as of significant practical use to the management. It is considered that this research has generated new knowledge that can contribute to future theory development. Contributions are summarised in the following sections.

12.2.1. Qualifiers, enablers, inhibitors

This research contributes to theory relating to the influences on internal capacity (Stoll, 1999) in a number of ways:

1. It is found that rather than being positive, negative, or 'neutral', this third category is far less relevant and should be replace by the category 'qualifier'. It was argued in the discussion that a 'neutral' influence is not, in fact, an influence at all. It is found that certain influences upon an organisation's ability to implement a policy act as 'qualifiers'. A lack of these sorts of influence will 'inhibit' implementation of the policy, or its positive capacity-related benefits.
2. It is further found that Stoll's (1999) influences on internal capacity bear influence upon internal capacity in two ways in the context of examining implementation of policy, or indeed any capacity-building initiative an organisation might choose to adopt. This was the main 'surprise' of this research, as it was an emergent finding. Firstly, as 'indirect influences'; these influence practical ways in which a policy can be implemented and, thus, only indirectly affect the capacity-related effects a policy is perceived to give rise to. Secondly, as 'direct influences'; these influence the capacity-related effects a policy is perceived to give rise to. Both direct, and indirect, influences can be qualifiers, enablers, or inhibitors.
3. In agreement with Stoll's (1999) framework, influences are found to vary from one organisational context to another. This study finds evidence that an influence in one context may not be perceived as significant at another; that which acts as a qualifier in one organisation may be an enabler in another. There are, however, some general patterns to be interpreted from the evidence (those that arose in more than one setting), so that the following list gives an indication of the key influences on implementation of a centrally driven policy designed to build capacity for improvement. It may be that this list has implications for other organisations besides schools. So in terms of the ease with which they can cope with a change, pupils may share similar influential qualities with the clients of a health service, for example. The contextual nature of this research restricts more generalised conclusions being drawn, however. The key indirect influences upon implementation of a capacity-building initiative found by this study all relate to 'people factors'. They are shown below along with an indication, in parenthesis, of which sort of influence they are found to be. Key influences are:

- Community that can provide for the needs of the implementation strategy where this is not done internally (Q / E)

- External support from appropriate stakeholders providing training and ideas (E)
- Efficient leadership from inside, that puts together a well designed strategy (Q)
- Influencing leadership, that ensures strategy is carried out productively (E)
- Leadership that communicates a vision for the benefits of the policy and strategy (E)
- Positive behaviour and attitudes of pupils that facilitates desired strategy (Q)
- A willing body of support staff to form part of the strategy where necessary (Q)
- Positive working relationships of organisational members to allow the strategy to work (Q / E)
- Beliefs of professional staff in the efficacy of components of the implementation strategy (Q)

A qualifier (Q) is found to be necessary for positive implementation and may even take on the properties of an enabler (E) where sufficiently positive. An enabler, on the other hand, contributes positively to implementation of the initiative, but implementation is not dependent upon it. So external support, for example, is helpful, but not always necessary. Positive relationships are necessary, but the fostering of very positive relationships can reap rewards when it comes to influencing implementation. These findings shine new light on the 'influences' that schools should seek to ensure they accounts for in implementing a capacity building initiative and, as such, contribute to the body of knowledge on the influences on internal capacity.

12.2.2. Links between influences and capacity themes

This research contributes to theory in a new way in that it links the influences on internal capacity (Stoll, 1999) to the twelve capacity themes identified in Table 3-2:

1. A contribution of this study is that it links influences to the twelve capacity-related themes examined so that a number of key direct influences on the capacity-related effects of an initiative can be identified. These are identified in Table 12-1 that facilitates comparison with Stoll's (1999) framework to show the contribution made by this study in terms of identifying those influences that directly impact on capacity-related effects. Where the study did not identify a theme, Stoll's (1999) theme was not seen to be related to the capacity-related effects. An example of this from Table 12-1 is that Stoll's (1999) sub-theme 'emotional well-being' was not seen to bear influence on capacity, either directly or indirectly, in this study.

Influence dimension	**Sub-theme identified by Stoll (1999)**	**Identified by this study**
Teacher	Life and career experiences	**Role** of teacher
	Beliefs	
	Emotional wellbeing	
	Knowledge	
	Skills	
	Motivation to learn	
	Confidence that (s)he can make a real difference	
	Sense of interdependence	
		Positive **use of time** by teachers
School	The particular mix of pupils	
	Relationships between teachers	
	Morale	
	History	**Size** of the organisation does not limit collaborative working **Financial** situation of the organisation does not inhibit sustainability of a policy
	Culture	**Cultural** openness and positivity that enhances capacity-related co-operation
	Power issues	
	Support staff	A body of **support staff** who can provide a sustainable implementation solution
	Structures	**Accommodation** allows collaboration **Strategy** that allows collaborative working
	Leadership	

External	The local community	
	The broader community	
	Political action and tone	**External pressure** or ongoing political will to maintain the policy or initiative where it may otherwise be sidelined **The policy** or initiative itself
	Professional learning infrastructure	
	Global change forces	

Table 12-1 Comparison of Stoll's (1999) framework: influences on internal capacity with findings from this study

This study thus contributes to the scholarly literature on internal conditions and influences on those conditions through its finding that several of Stoll's (1999) influences are less significant in the context of schools implementing a policy or initiative designed to build capacity. Although empirical data reflects perception data gathered in a school context, it may be that there are implications here for organisations facing similar situations of policy implementation.

In relation to the one completely emergent finding, 'use of time' by teachers, this study contributes the idea that specific activities may be more significant than others in relation to building capacity for improvement. It further contributes a 'typology of time saving' (Figure 11-3), which shows the relationship between efficiency, thoroughness, and time saving found in the context of this study. It could be used in developing future theory because it indicates some of the complexities involved in ensuring that the benefits of a policy (such as PPA) are maximised.

2. Finally, in relation to the influences on internal capacity, this study finds a number of influences to be more relevant than others in terms of leading to the twelve capacity themes. It contributes a number of what it refers to as 'higher order influences' (see Figure 11-4). Stoll (1999) alluded to the interconnectedness of the influences, suggesting that greater understanding is needed in determining how the influences relate to one another and compare in importance. This is a novel

contribution to the literature relating to influences on internal capacity because it shows some of those interrelationships. These influences are:

- Leadership
- Mix of pupils
- Finances
- School size

These higher order influences are shown to bear impact upon the capacity-related effects of a policy or improvement initiative because of the influence they have upon the way in which teachers spend their time, or the strategy implemented. This finding may have implications for further research examining whether these same influences are found to be significant in other contexts, because the current findings are bounded within the empirical data collected in a school context.

12.2.3. Capacity building

This study contributes to understandings of capacity in the public sector through developing the notion of the resource-based view of capacity. It finds 'capacity' to be best understood as: the possession of resources necessary to sustain continuous improvement effort, and the ability to maximise their benefits. It finds 'capacity building' to be best understood as: the process of developing the necessary resources to meet improvement objectives, and of maximising the benefits of those resources through organisational capabilities (see Figure 11-5). It is the position of this thesis that these definitions might be used in a wider context than schools because definitions are built through review of the existing literature as well as through examination of empirical evidence.

This research has responded to the calls for clear definitions, that are sufficiently broad, and yet specific in the detail of the meaning of words (Harrow, 2001, Cohen, 1995). These definitions may assist in future research on capacity building. It has responded to the debate concerning the value of defining capacity building as an 'end' in itself (Eade, 1997, Maconick and Morgan, 1999, Cohen, 1995). This study shows clearly that capacity building is a process; the 'means'. Capacity on the other hand is the end goal of capacity building, but only the start of improvement. This study has also responded to the need for clarification of the *objectives* of capacity building, by proposing that not only is 'sustainable continuous improvement' a defining aspect of function and goals of an organisation, but yet it also reflects the function of capacity.

12.3. Implications

Beyond the theoretical contributions already identified, this section examines a number of implications this study contributes both to policy, and to practice.

12.3.1. Implications for practice

With relation to this study's aim *to determine the factors affecting the effectiveness of PPA time in the context of primary schools* a number of implementation decisions emerge from this study that are useful guides for practice. Implementation decisions or 'strategy' emerged as a school level influence, situated within Stoll's (1999) framework at the level of 'structures'. Table 12-2 shows the conditions under which the positive capacity-related effects of PPA arise most readily, i.e. it addresses the specifics of the emergent influence 'strategy', which is a key finding of this study. Of course, not all these decisions will be possible in all schools because of resourcing issues. Table 12-2 provides a guide, however, to show headteachers what they must aim for in order to optimize their schools' capacities in relation to the implementation of PPA time or, in a wider context, to any allocation of non-contact time to teachers:

Implementation decision	Positive effects arise more readily when:
➲ Who to use as the source of cover	➲ The person providing cover has the appropriate level of skills. ➲ There is continuity in the person providing cover. ➲ A back up plan is in place to ensure PPA is not lost due to absence. ➲ The cover is not expected to take abnormally large classes. ➲ Cover is sourced in-house in order to achieve a sustainable strategy of staff development; OR ➲ Expertise is sourced externally to enhance curriculum
➲ Which lessons to cover	➲ Teachers maintain control over the whole curriculum; OR ➲ An expert takes full responsibility for a part of the curriculum, including planning, preparation, and assessment
➲ When to schedule PPA time	➲ PPA time is scheduled in a single block for each teacher. ➲ In schools with only one class per year group, PPA is scheduled simultaneously so they can still engage in

	informal exchange of ideas or seek help
➲ Whether to make use of contract extension	➲ Contact extension is not used as a means of meeting cover requirements
➲ Whether to facilitate collaborative working	➲ Teachers have opportunity, and are encouraged, to work collaboratively, in order to develop their skills, share ideas and expertise, to provide opportunity for peer coaching, and to allow shared preparation and encourage trying out of new 'risky' ideas
➲ Whether to facilitate working with TAs during PPA time	➲ TAs play an active part in PPA time to encourage exchange of ideas, learning, mentoring, knowledge transfer, and to ensure support tasks are not taken on by teachers
➲ What to do during PPA time	➲ Teachers are encouraged to use the time for certain beneficial activities rather than solely for planning (although statutory requirements stipulate teachers must have freedom to use this time how they please). Particularly assessment-related activities; working in collaboration with others; developing the school's improvement agenda through focusing on that which has been discussed in staff meetings; using the time reflectively ➲ Teachers strike a balance between efficiency and thoroughness in order that the school benefits most from their time savings
➲ Where PPA time should be taken	➲ PPA is taken in school close to resources and other teachers ➲ Teachers should have somewhere quiet to work where they will not be disturbed

Table 12-2 Key implementation decisions and recommendations based on findings

These recommendations do not just relate to the PPA time policy. There are significant take-away findings from this table that can inform school leaders about the sorts of decisions to make with regard to such diverse decisions as who to use for cover supervision or specified work when providing cover for absent teachers, or how to provide more general release time for teachers, for example. These sorts of decisions have real implications for the building of

capacity for improvement within schools, and implications of following (or not following) these decisions were seen time and again as research progressed from one school to the next.

12.3.2. Implications for policy

The findings of this study could be relevant for policy makers in the UK who are responsible for developing policy strategy aimed at building the capacity for improvement in public sector organisations.

1. *Linkages between capacity themes and influences*

This research gives policymakers a clearer idea of the meaning of capacity and capacity building so that they can incorporate language into their policies that focuses on the sorts of resources and capabilities they wish to develop. It further gives them an opportunity to consider the relationships between the capacity themes they aim to build upon through particular policies, and the factors that influence the capacity themes that are affected by policies. This study has linked a number of influences to internal capacity, and where policymakers have the power relating to any of these influences, they can further influence the capacity building benefits of a policy. Particularly relevant to policymakers will be the external influences including making sure the political will to maintain a policy is in place; that the policy details are in line with capacity themes; and that external pressure is in place pressing upon organisations the necessity of carrying out the policy.

2. *Linkages between influences and implementation*

This study demonstrates to policymakers that there are a number of influences upon organisational ability to implement a policy, and that these are different from (although still affect indirectly) those influences upon internal capacity. While all indirect influences should be considered by policymakers, particularly relevant will be the role of external support for the implementing organisations. Although empirical data examined schools in particular, recognition that influences may be both direct and indirect may have implications for other organisations where policy is to be implemented.

3. *Clear policy communication*

Communication of the purpose of the policy to all levels of the workforce is very significant to the way in which that policy is deconstructed and reconstructed, and the capacity-related effects it is perceived to have. The danger of relying upon senior

managers (headteachers, in the context of this research) to communicate policy is that other members of the workforce may not receive the full message. Consequently they have limited awareness about its purposes and not see some of its potential benefits. This has links to the notion of external support and the way in which outside agencies are given a role in guiding and supporting schools (and perhaps other public sector organisations) in implementation of policies. One way that differences were seen in PPA was demonstrated through the typology of time saving, which may serve as a useful communication tool for policymakers.

4. *Balancing prescription and choice*

There is a fine line in terms of senior management vision and implementation strategy choice, and positive / negative consequences. To a certain extent, senior managers (i.e. headteachers,) should be given the credit of their experience and be allowed freedom to be more directive over elements of a policy. Policymakers must take into account the possible costs and benefits of being prescriptive in all elements of a policy. One way to do this is by listening to those at the front line.

5. *Differential effect of policy*

Policymakers should recognise that organisations have differential capacities for change and development and they may wish to target organisations in different ways if they are to ensure capacity is built in as many areas as possible.

6. *Focus on resources and capabilities*

Having linked organisational capacity and capacity building together through both the literature and the empirical research, this study has developed understanding of what it means to build capacity in the public sector. In order to sustain improvement through policy, the implications to policymakers are clear: focus on developing the sorts of capabilities as examined in the form of the twelve themes of this study; do this by ensuring that policy focuses on targeting resources within schools and, possibly, within organisations where aspects of context are similar.

12.4. Evaluation

Silverman's (2001:189) 'gold standard' for qualitative research is this: *"have the researchers demonstrated successfully why we should believe them? And does the research problem tackled have theoretical and / or practical significance?"*. In terms of theoretical

significance, until this study there has been little understanding of the way in which influences on internal capacity impact upon organisational capacity for improvement. Findings have been detailed and interesting but there are ways that the study could have been improved, however. The way which these limitations can be developed into future research is investigated in the next section.

1. *Limited generalisability*

Although ambitious for a time constrained piece of doctoral research, the study confined its range to six organisations in one Local Authority. While this provided a manageable piece of work for what is, essentially, a limited piece of Ph.D work, and yielded some meaningful results, an expansion of this study is something that future research should consider. Arguably, broadening this research to include more schools would have taken into account a greater range of contexts and allowed for greater generalisability. Key influences found were not generally emergent in all schools and so the research did not provide a universal rule. An assumption was made that where an influence was seen in more than one school, it was significant. Had it been down to a contextual idiosyncrasy, it is much less likely that this would have emerged from the data in more than one school. Examination of more schools may have brought forth a wider range of 'influences' or – more likely – contributed further evidence for those that were found, and so contributed to this study's understanding of direct, indirect, and higher order influences. It would, however, have had a detrimental impact on the richness of data gathered, and perhaps the robustness of evidence for findings.

2. *Learning curve*

Because of the nature of fieldwork; taking place in three blocks, inevitably there was development in researcher knowledge of theory and practice that took place between visits. On the one hand, this meant some of the earlier findings – in relation to the effects arising from PPA – were used less in the final analysis. On the other hand, as it will be argued here, this strengthened the approach taken over time. The interview process was greatly strengthened; interview schedules were used far more rigidly and great care was taken to ensure respondents were not influenced in the ideas and words they used. A clearer structure for questions meant less ambiguous answers were given, and this has led to a strong confidence in the analysis and findings, both from the point of view of the researcher, and from headteachers validating the research.

3. *Choice of theoretical frameworks*

The six internal conditions (Ainscow et al., 1994, Hopkins et al., 1994, Hopkins et al., 1996) framework was developed through a 'bottom-up' process involving consultations with school staff in order to help schools create an improvement environment. Its transferability to the context of a centrally driven policy is something this study assumed but which could be brought into question by its critics. A justification for using this framework was that the study examined capacity for improvement and there appeared to be no strong reason why these six conditions might not be significant management arrangements in the context under study. Use of Stoll's (1999) framework of influences upon internal conditions could be criticised on the grounds that it is not empirically grounded. This study used this framework because it was both well cited and unique in terms of its novel contribution to understanding of capacity. In order to avoid predetermination of research outcomes, aspects of the framework were not used directly in questioning interviewees. Instead, they were drawn out interpretively, so providing support for Stoll's (1999) framework and ensuring results were grounded in the empirical evidence of emergent findings, rather than being shaped by Stoll's framework.

12.5. Further work

This study has answered some questions, but in shedding light on the subject, has also raised some. This section examines some of those briefly to provide recommendations for future research in the field of public sector capacity building. It should be observed that the following points do not reflect a comprehensive assessment of possible avenues for research. On reflection of this research account other interested parties may develop ideas as they bring their own interests to this study.

1. *Wider study within schools*

Because of the limitations of this study in being restricted to six cases in one Local Authority, there is scope to work with schools in other Local Authorities in order to add to the findings. This would also serve to validate the study in terms of its reliability by examining whether a repeat of the study would obtain the same sorts of findings. Subsequent study would aim to build on existing findings identified within this study, with a view to confirming the direct, indirect, and higher order influences, to see if the relationships hold true and if more are found. Access to these organisations could be secured through Local Authorities and the TDA who are keen to be involved with policy evaluation at implementation level. There is also scope to expand upon the range of methods used already. For example, as this study developed it was found that a

combination of more closed interview questions (in relation to the effects of PPA) as well as space for free commenting within that interview structure, led to more meaningful and comparable comments between teachers and school. It allowed for the construction of charts from which to visualise patterns and made the job of interpretation less ambiguous. A survey was also used in this study and it is considered that emphasis on these sorts of techniques, rather than upon semi-structured interviewing as the main technique, might facilitate study across a greater number of schools.

2. *Further study of existing organisations*

Although this study took place over a period of four school terms, involving three periods of fieldwork in the six schools, the limitations of doctoral research meant it did not qualify as truly longitudinal. Various changes have occurred in all six school since the last visit, such as loss of staff providing PPA cover, changes of leadership, building work providing more accommodation. It is anticipated that further research examining perceptions of PPA's impact on those twelve capacity-related effects would provide very valuable insights into the particular influences upon capacity. For example, after a period of time has passed there may be issues to do with sustainability of various strategies, or to do with the benefits (or otherwise) of developing support staff that did not come to light during this study. These would provide further insights into the relationships between influences on internal capacity, and capacity, and into the relevance of the various influences.

3. *Wider study in other public sector contexts*

Although conducted in the field of school improvement, the notion of influences on internal capacity is of equal significance in other public service organisations, as suggested in the discussion already. While understandings of capacity and capacity building generated by this study are not considered to be limited to school contexts alone, some of the influences on internal capacity are peculiar to schools and it could be predicted that other sectors would have some influences unique to them. Further study in other contexts could be an exciting opportunity to transfer knowledge across sectors by picking out similarly unique influences in those contexts and by confirming the reliability of an influence model. The PPA policy was chosen for its relevance as a capacity building policy in a resource-constrained environment but this is not to say policies with the same sorts of driving purpose could not be found in local government,

or the health sector, for example. Basing research around a capacity building policy allows comparison of a number of organisations.

4. *Focus on the influences unique to only one case*

For this study, discussion of indirect and direct influences were limited to those that were common to more than one case (explained in Appendix 14) because multiple findings meant analysis had to be limited. It was considered influences that affected two or more cases showed a pattern of general importance from one context to another (maybe in different ways, but important nevertheless), and so were of more generalisable relevance. On the other hand, those unique to one school were more idiosyncratic and contributed less to an understanding of general contextual influences. While these findings were not included, it may be that they should warrant further attention to determine whether they were in fact idiosyncratic, or whether they would be seen as more significant across a larger set of cases. It may also be that specific questioning on these influences in the original set of schools would draw them out as being specific. This study took an emergent approach to drawing influences from the data in order to avoid influencing respondents' answers and forcing a fit with the existing influences framework, however. It is considered that future studies should account for such risks.

5. *Higher order influences*

This research has partly addressed Stoll's (1999) proposal that relationships between influences should be examined, and a key finding was the notion of four *higher order influences* (leadership, mix of pupils, school size, and funding) that impacted upon a number of the *direct influences* on a school's internal capacity. As such, it provides a starting point for future research. What would be particularly interesting is to see if similar higher order influences are found in other public services in order that a more comprehensive framework could be developed. Alternatively, the same four influences could be examined in much closer detail in a school context. Of particular interest to this researcher is the influence 'size' because, as addressed in the discussion, the relationship between school size and capacity for improvement is an area ripe for exploration. As well as being of theoretical interest, school size is of very practical interest in terms of weighing up such factors as financial viability of some smaller schools against the benefits they can offer.

12.6. Concluding thoughts

This final chapter has summarised the study, beginning with the rationale for research questions, to evaluation of the research. It has demonstrated the study's contribution to the body of knowledge, in terms of its empirical examination of the relationship between influences on internal capacity, and capacity building, including its identification of direct-, indirect- and higher-order influences, which have both practical and theoretical relevance. The findings serve to further what is known about public sector capacity building, providing a unique synthesis of the literature on organisational capacity and capacity building, and contributing to understanding through this empirical research.

Overall, this research contributes an insightful scrutiny of how organisations create capacity for improvement through policy implementation. While only a few of the influences found were novel, it is the insight into the way in which they contribute specifically to organisational capabilities that presents a new understanding. Previous work had not linked the influences to the capacity themes (capabilities) through empirical research. This thesis has also brought much needed clarification to the inherently unsatisfactory notion of capacity. In addition, this research has identified different types of influence, including direct, indirect, and higher order influences, which serves to contribute to the current literature in terms of influences on internal capacity, and which provide a platform from which to engage in future research. It is the firm hope of the writer that the findings disclosed in this thesis will be of actual, relevant, and even substantial import in the subject of organisational capacity and capacity building, and that the reader will feel there has been benefit received from his persevering to the end!

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13. Appendices

13.1. Appendix 1

Levels of capacity

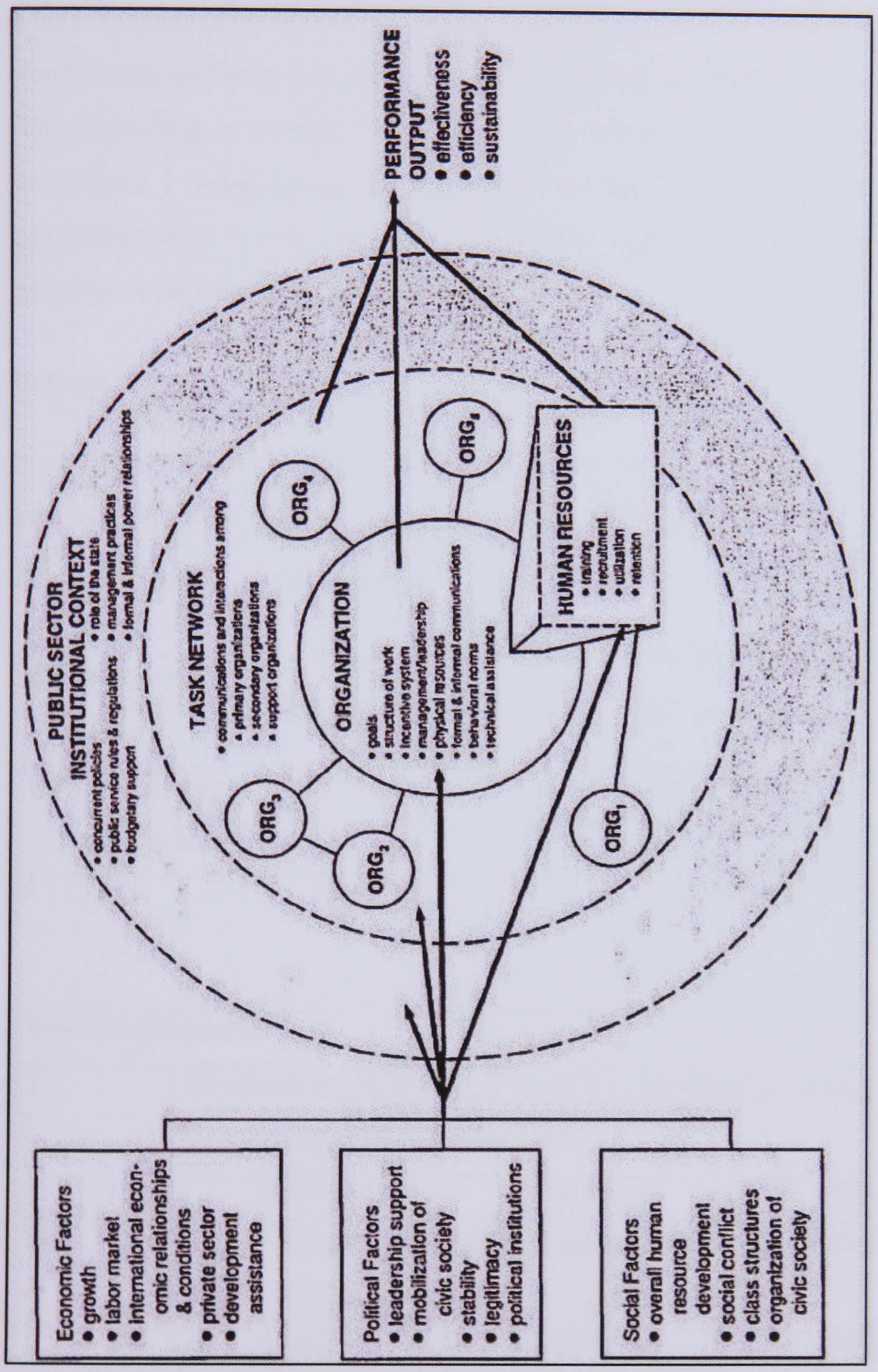


Figure 13-1 Dimensions affecting capacity and capacity building (Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995)

Shows the five dimensions of capacity and capacity building: action environment; institutional context; task network; organisations and; human resources.

13.2. Appendix 2

The School Conditions Survey

This questionnaire is concerned with the conditions which are considered important for school improvement. I am interested in your opinion of the extent to which these conditions apply to your own school, as part of my Ph.D research. The information you provide is confidential and your individual responses will not be divulged to any member of the school. The following is a series of 24 statements about your school; they are linked to the six conditions. I would appreciate your views on how far you feel each statement matches your own perception of the school. There are no right or wrong answers; please indicate the response which best matches your own views.

School:

Please indicate your present post:

Support staff	
Teacher	
Senior manager	
School governor	

Staff Development				
1	**Professional learning of staff is valued in this school and school policies emphasise staff development.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2	**There are procedures for ensuring that staff development policies respond to changes in staff needs.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3	**I know whom to talk to about my staff development needs.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4	**The school's organization provides time for staff development.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
Involvement				

5	**In this school we ask students for their views before we make major changes.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6	**This school takes parents' views into consideration when changes are made to the curriculum.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
7	**Governors and staff work together to decide future directions for the school.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
8	**We make effective use of outside support agencies (e.g. Local Education Authority, Higher Education Institutions, or Consultants) in our development work.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
Enquiry / Reflection				
9	**In this school we talk about the quality of our teaching.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
10	**As a school we review the progress of changes we introduce.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
11	**Teachers make time to review their classroom practice.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
12	**I can express my views about school policies and practices freely.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
Leadership				
13	**Staff in the school have a clear vision of the school's development aims.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
14	**Leadership styles are generally appropriate to the task in hand.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
15	**Staff are given opportunities to take on leadership roles.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
16	**The 'culture' of our school reflects the values and personality of the leadership.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
Coordination				
17	**We get tasks done by working in teams.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
18	**The links and overlaps between activities are well coordinated.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
19	**Staff are clear about their own and other people's responsibilities and are kept informed about key decisions.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS

20	**Informal contacts with my colleagues make a positive contribution to my work and classroom practice.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
Collaborative Planning				
21	**Our long-term aims are reflected in the school's plans.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
22	**In our school the process of planning together is regarded as being as important as the written plan.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
23	**Everyone is fully aware of the school's developmental priorities.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
24	**In the school we review and modify our plans.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS

13.3. Appendix 3

Year R / 1 – classroom layout sketch (Barfields)

As explained in section 3.5.3.5, layout sketches were made during observations of each interviewee in their place of work.

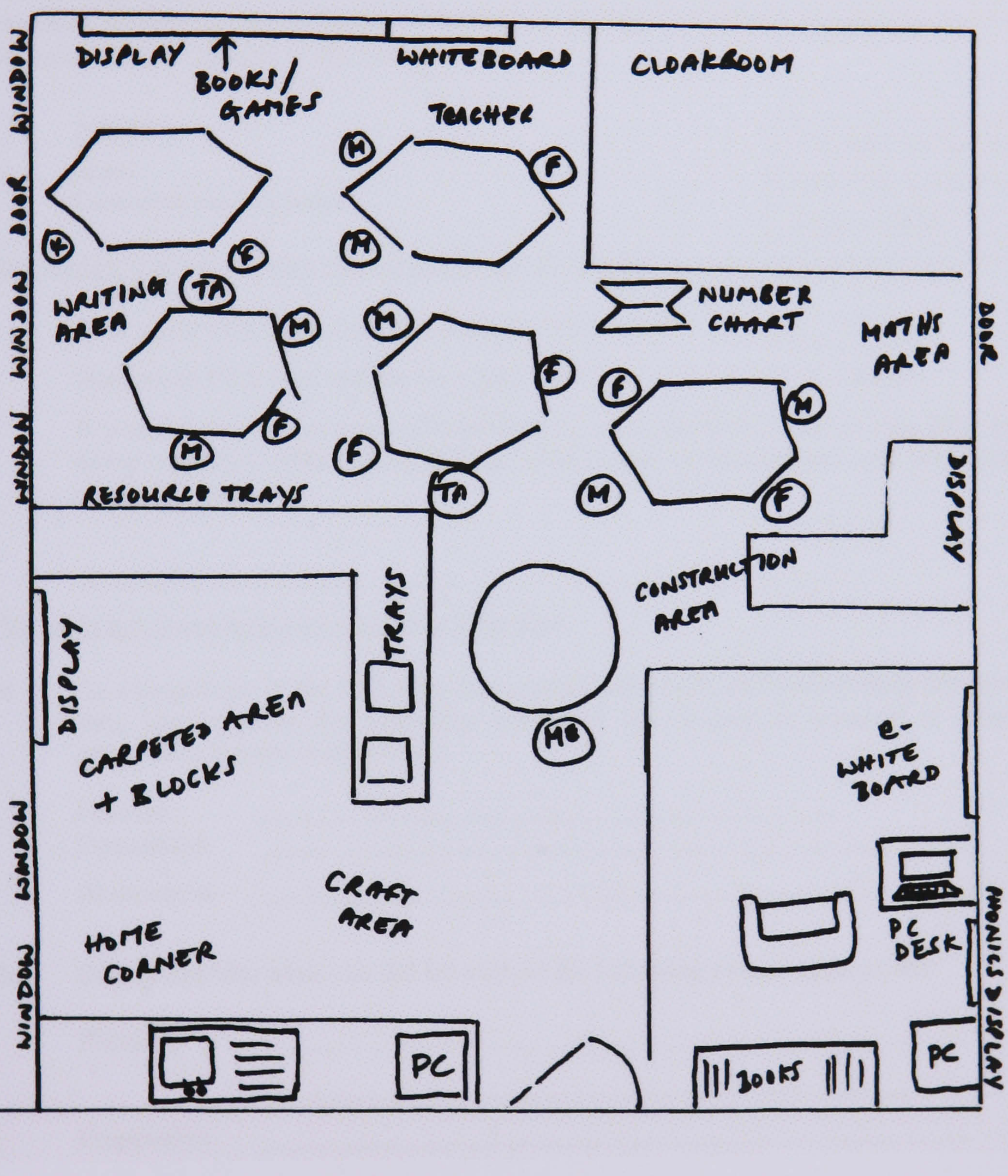


Figure 13-2 Sketch of Jane's Year R / 1 classroom at Barfields

13.4. Appendix 4

Diary study (blank)

This weekly log of your experiences with PPA forms part of my Ph.D research. The information you provide is confidential and your individual responses and comments will not be divulged to any member of the school. It is designed to be filled out at the end of each week, for at least four consecutive weeks, so I am able to build up a picture of how teachers spend PPA time and how attitudes towards it develop over time. If you are able to carry on with the log beyond the four weeks this would be appreciated. You are welcome to give comments beyond the set questions each week, or to expand on tick-box questions, as your own opinions are valuable to this research.

1 School

2 Name

3 Contracted teaching hours*

* If these do not vary from week to week you may leave blank.

This section is about whether you received your PPA time

4 How much PPA time were you entitled to this week?* _____ (hours)

5 How much PPA time did you have this week? _____ (hours)

6 If you did not receive your full entitlement, or if you spent some of your PPA time doing activities other than planning, preparation, or assessment, can you give a reason for this?

_____

This section is about how you spent your PPA time

7a As a proportion of the PPA time that you had this week, can you estimate how much time was spent in the following activities? [e.g. 0 spent in planning; ½ spent in preparation; ½ spent in assessment]

Planning _____

Preparation _____

Assessment _____

7b Briefly describe what you did for each of the following (where appropriate)

Planning _____

_____

Preparation _____

_____

Assessment _____

_____

8 Please indicate whether you received this week's PPA time:

Altogether in one block ☐ Spread across two or more sessions ☐

This section is about who you worked with during your PPA time

9a Who did you work with during your PPA time?

Planning alone ☐ colleague ☐

Preparation alone ☐ colleague ☐

Assessment alone ☐ colleague ☐

9b If you worked alone during your PPA time, please chose a reason from the list below, or explain in your own words:

Planning ____ other _____

Preparation ____ other _____

Assessment ____ other _____

(a) Because you did not have the opportunity to be with colleagues during your PPA time

(b) Because there was no need to coordinate your work this week

9c If you worked with a colleague during your PPA time, please choose a reason from the list below, or explain in your own words:

Planning ____ other _____

Preparation ____ other _____

Assessment ____ other _____

Reasons

(a) Because you need to be able to coordinate your work.

(b) For mutual support because you were carrying out similar work.

(c) Because you have been allocated PPA time together.

(d) Because you were mentoring your colleague.

(e) Because you were being mentored, or seeking advice.

10a Are you finding PPA to be a positive thing? Yes ☐ No ☐

10b If 'yes', can you give any examples of how PPA has impacted on your work this week?

_____

_____

_____

10c If 'yes' or 'no', can you comment on how PPA time could be improved and made more useful for you?

_____

_____

Diary study (completed example)

This weekly log of your experiences with PPA forms part of my Ph.D research. The information you provide is confidential and your individual responses and comments will not be divulged to any member of the school. It is designed to be filled out at the end of each week, for at least four consecutive weeks, so I am able to build up a picture of how teachers spend PPA time and how attitudes towards it develop over time. If you are able to carry on with the log beyond the four weeks this would be appreciated. You are welcome to give comments beyond the set questions each week, or to expand on tick-box questions, as your own opinions are valuable to this research.

1 School BARFIELDS

2 Name ANNA .....

3 Contracted teaching hours*

* If these do not vary from week to week you may leave blank.

This section is about whether you received your PPA time

4 How much PPA time were you entitled to this week?* __1 ¼ _____ (hours)

5 How much PPA time did you have this week? __1 ¼ _____ (hours)

6 If you did not receive your full entitlement, or if you spent some of your PPA time doing activities other than planning, preparation, or assessment, can you give a reason for this?

_____

This section is about how you spent your PPA time

7a As a proportion of the PPA time that you had this week, can you estimate how much time was spent in the following activities? [e.g. 0 spent in planning; ½ spent in preparation; ½ spent in assessment]

Planning ½ _____
Preparation _____
Assessment ½ _____

7b Briefly describe what you did for each of the following (where appropriate)

Planning BEGINNING TO IDENTIFY UNITS OF WORK FOR MATHS AND ENGLISH FOR SECOND HALF TERM

Preparation _____

Assessment LOOKING THROUGH DAILY EVALUATIONS IN PREPARATION FOR NEXT HALF TERM IN ENGLISH AND MATHS

8 Please indicate whether you received this week's PPA time:

Altogether in one block ✓ Spread across two or more sessions ☐

This section is about who you worked with during your PPA time

9a Who did you work with during your PPA time?

Planning alone ✓ colleague ☐

Preparation alone ✓ colleague ☐

Assessment alone ✓ colleague ☐

9b If you worked <u>alone</u> during your PPA time, please chose a reason from the list below, or explain in your own words:

Planning _a___ other _____

Preparation _a___ other _____

Assessment _ a___ other _____

(a) Because you did not have the opportunity to be with colleagues during your PPA time

(b) Because there was no need to coordinate your work this week

9c If you worked <u>with a colleague</u> during your PPA time, please choose a reason from the list below, or explain in your own words:

Planning ____ other _____

Preparation ____ other _____

Assessment ____ other _____

Reasons

(a) Because you need to be able to coordinate your work.

(b) For mutual support because you were carrying out similar work.

(c) Because you have been allocated PPA time together.

(d) Because you were mentoring your colleague.

(e) Because you were being mentored, or seeking advice.

10a Are you finding PPA to be a positive thing? Yes ✓ No ☐

10b If 'yes', can you give any examples of how PPA has impacted on your work this week?

ADDITIONAL TIME TO VIEW ASSESSMENTS AND EVALUATIONS TO INFORM FUTURE PLANNING

10c If 'yes' or 'no', can you comment on how PPA time could be improved and made more useful for you?

MORE OF IT!

13.5. Appendix 5

Example interview and observation timetable (Meadows)

Day	Time	Activity
Monday	9.00 - 12.00	Observe Teacher 1
	1.15 - 3.15	Observe Teacher 2
Tuesday	9.00 - 12.15	Observe Teacher 3
	1.15 - 2.15	Interview Teacher
	12.15 - 3.15	Interview Teacher 2
Wednesday	9.00 - 12.15	Observe Teacher 4
	1.15 - 2.15	Interview Teacher
	2.15 - 3.15	Interview Teacher 4
Thursday	9.00 - 11.15	Observe Teacher 5
	11.15 - 12.15	Interview Teacher

Table 13-1 Example interview and observation schedule

13.6. Appendix 6

Interview schedules

Round 1 Headteacher Interview Schedule

Q1 How would you describe the context of your school?

Q2 What, if anything, do you think a school can gain from teachers having PPA time?

Q3 How will you implement PPA time and what were the decisions you had to make when considering how to?

Q4 What are the problems, or potential problems, you are facing with the implementation of PPA time?

Q5 How will you maintain the 10% PPA requirement in the long term?

Q6 What factors do you consider to be important influences on your school's ability to maximize the benefits of PPA, either positively or negatively?

Q7 What, if anything, do you hope your school will gain, in the longer term, from the process of implementing PPA time? [use sheet 1]

Round 1 Teacher Interview Schedule

What is your role in the school?

Q1a How do you define 'planning', 'preparation', and 'assessment'.

Q1b And which element of PPA; so the planning, the preparation, or the assessment, do you find most useful in terms of reducing workload?

What about in terms of raising standards?

Q2 So how do you receive your PPA time each week?

Q3 Why do you think the government has brought in PPA time?

[sheet 1] Which do you think are the most likely outcomes of PPA in this school?

Q4 Can you see any problems with PPA either in general, with the policy itself, or the way it's been implemented in this school?

Q5a Series of questions as per Appendix 9

Q5b Of all of those answers you gave,, do any of them stick out to you as being more important in terms of helping the school to make its standards even better; so what is it that PPA actually does, if anything?

Q6 Other comments?

Round 2 Headteacher Interview Schedule

Q2 Can you summarize your approach to releasing time and organizing cover for PPA?

Q1a Of the three PPA activities, what do you think teachers are spending most of their working lives on here? Least?

Q1b What do you think teachers are spending most of their PPA time on? Least?

Q1c What determines how teachers spend their time?

Q3a Can you sum up what you think PPA is meant to achieve?

Q3b [sheet 1] Can you tell me whether each of these outcomes are very likely (1) possible (2) or unlikely (3) in this school?

Q3c Which of those outcomes is the most likely? How does PPA do this? Which is the least likely? Why did you pick that one?

Q3d Do you think that teachers in this school are saving 2½ hours for their own activities, or more or less than that? So, what effect do you think PPA has on your teachers' workload?

Q3e How has PPA time affected your workload?

Q5a [List of questions as per Appendix 9] With the next set of questions I might say to you, for example, "does PPA time develop your skills at teaching?" I want you to give me two answers to all of these questions. So you might say "now, it probably doesn't, in the future, it definitely will" and I tick a box for your answers. Really important – I want you to think about this school and the way things have been organized here. Influences?

Q5b For each of those questions, what is that currently like in this school? If this school is to improve, how important is it that this improves? very important (2) important (1) unimportant (0) Why?

Q5c There will be certain contextual factors specific to your school, which led you to say some effects are definite and some are probable. Can you give me some examples of those influences?

Q6a Do you think PPA is helping or will help to build the capacity for improvement in your school? How?

Q6b If I said that your school has 'capacity for improvement' what would that mean to you?

Q6c Looking wider than your school; as a policy, is PPA effective? If so, why? If not, why not? If not, how would you arrange it / what would you need, if it was to build capacity for improvement.

Q6d Looking wider than your school; as a policy, is PPA sustainable? Do you think it will stay or be replaced? If it is replaced, will you keep up the practice in your school?

Q7 Other comments?

Round 2 Teacher Interview Schedule

Introductory facts about the interviewee:
Leadership or management role?

Q2 What arrangements are made for your PPA time each week?

Q2a What time and day do you have your PPA time each week?

Q2b Who do you work with and where?

Q2c Who provides cover and what are they doing with your class?

Q1a Forget PPA time just for this question. What do you spend most time on as a teacher – planning, preparation, or assessment? Which do you spend least on?

Q1b What proportion of your PPA time are you spending on each of these at the moment? And has that changed since the Autumn term?

Q1c What determines how you spend your time?

Q3a Can you sum up what you think PPA is meant to achieve?

Q3b [sheet 1] Can you tell me whether each of these outcomes are very likely (1) possible (2) or unlikely (3) in this school? Which is the most likely? How does it do this? Which is the least likely?

Q3c Has it saved you 2½ hours, or more or less than that?

Q5a [List of questions as per Appendix 9]With the next set of questions I might say to you, for example, "does PPA time develop your skills at teaching?" I want you to give me two answers to all of these questions. So you might say "now, it probably doesn't, in the future, it definitely will" and I tick a box for your answers. Really important – I want you to think about <u>this</u> school.

Q5b What is that like in this school? If this school is to improve, how important is it that this improves? very important (2) important (1) unimportant (0) Why?

Q6a Do you think PPA is helping or will help to build the capacity for improvement in your school? How?
Q6b If I said that your school has 'capacity for improvement' what would that mean to you?

Q7 Other comments?

Sheet 1: Likely outcomes of PPA

- The school is better able to sustain improvement
- The school is better able to manage change
- Pupil learning and their outcomes are better
- Teachers' skills are improved
- Something else

Interview schedule for Local Authority representative

Q1 To discus the aim of the interview, and the research. To find the role of the LA in PPA time, recommendations for access to schools for the research.

Q2 To find out the role of the LA in general. How much of its time is spent in an advisory / training capacity. To learn details of the training given to schools in preparation for PPA time

Q3 To understand how the LA defines improvement, and what sort of improvement outcomes they are hoping for through PPA. How they plan to measure improvement, whether they do, or whether they just follow government instruction (i.e. is it sufficient that schools merely implement the policy?).

Q4 To learn more about PPA in relation to Workforce Remodelling and the 2 preceding strands of Workforce Remodelling, e.g. the 24 tasks.

Q5 To learn what the LA perceive as the driving force behind Workforce Remodelling and how this filters through to the training.

Policymaker interview questions

Q1 What would you say is the purpose of PPA time?

Q2 Can you tell me some of the outcomes you think might result from teachers having PPA time?

Q3 How likely are each of the following outcomes of having PPA? [sheet 1]

(very likely /likely/possible):

Q4 What sorts of strategies did you anticipate schools adopting?

Q5 Do you think PPA builds the capacity for improvement?

Q6 What do you understand by the term 'capacity for improvement'?

13.7. Appendix 7

Summary of diary study analysis

Diary studies were analysed by inputting data into a series of spreadsheets. This is the sheet from which charts relating to individual schools, as well as the two charts below giving an overall picture, were constructed. Analysis represents the information available, and it can be seen from the table below that three schools provided no diaries in term 3 (summer term).

	School	Number of hours		Time spend on activities (hours)			Entitlement Received
		Entitlement	Received	Planning	Preparation	Assessment	
Term 1	BARFIELDS	25.5	17.2	8.7	3.6	4.96	67.7%
	HALL GARDEN	10.0	8.5	2.5	0	6	85%
	MEADOWS	59.5	67.5	44.6	12.2	10.6	113.4%
	THE ORCHARD	111.7	79.0	43.6	26.5	8.9	70.7%
	UNDERWOOD	10.0	5.0	2.2	0.00	2.7	50%
	WESTFIELDS	12.5	12.5	5.3	4.50	2.6	100%
	TOTAL	229.2	189.7	56.5%	24.7%	18.9%	82.8%
Term 3	BARFIELDS						
	HALL GARDEN						
	MEADOWS	28.5	28.5	17.1	4.3	7	100%
	THE ORCHARD	15.0	10.5	6.3	3.3	0.8	70%
	UNDERWOOD	8.0	6.0	2.0	0	4.0	75%
	WESTFIELDS						
	TOTAL	51.5	45.0	56.5%	17.2%	26.3%	87.4%

Table 13-2 Analysis of diary studies

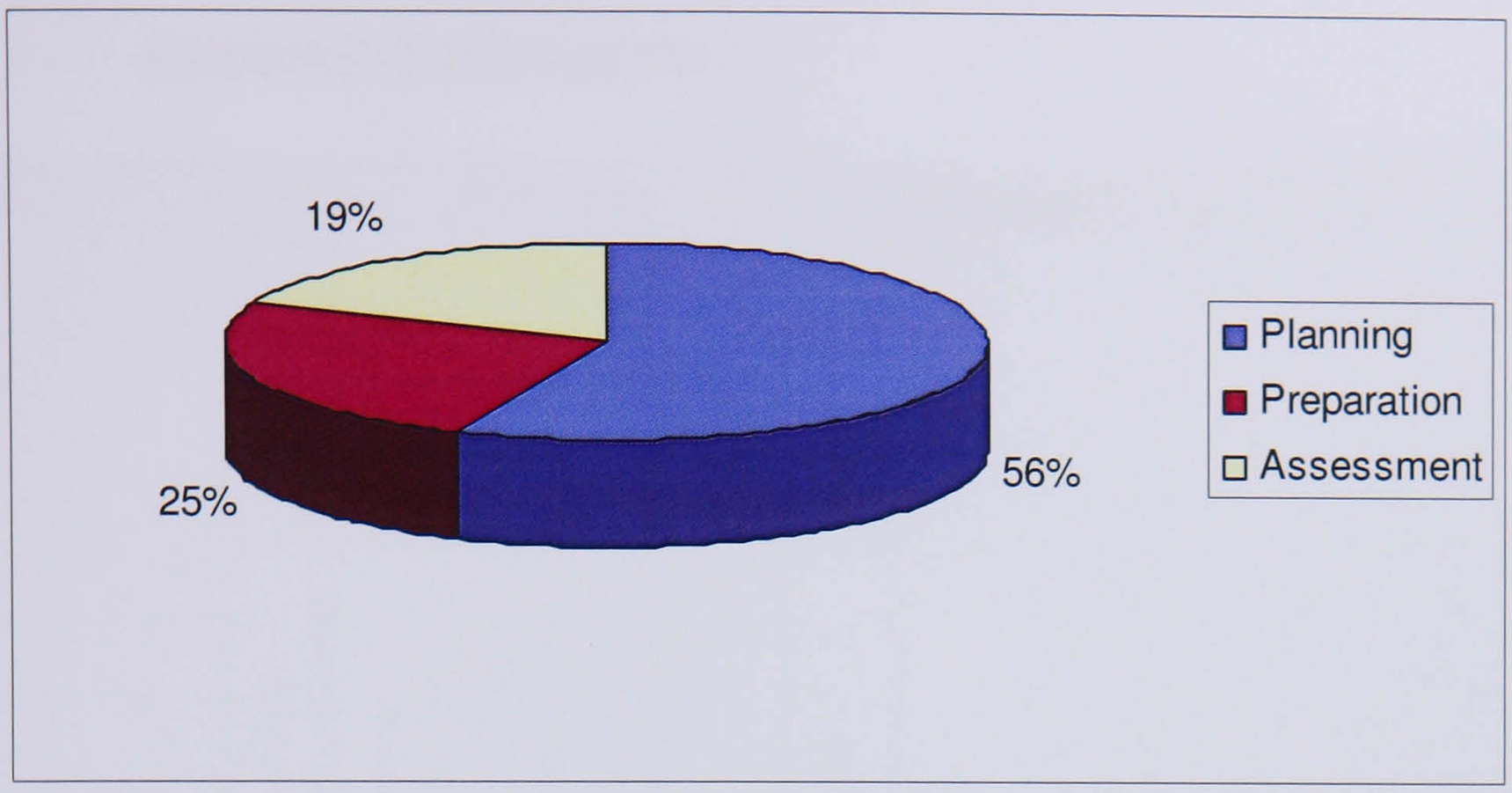


Figure 13-3 Use of PPA time in Term 1

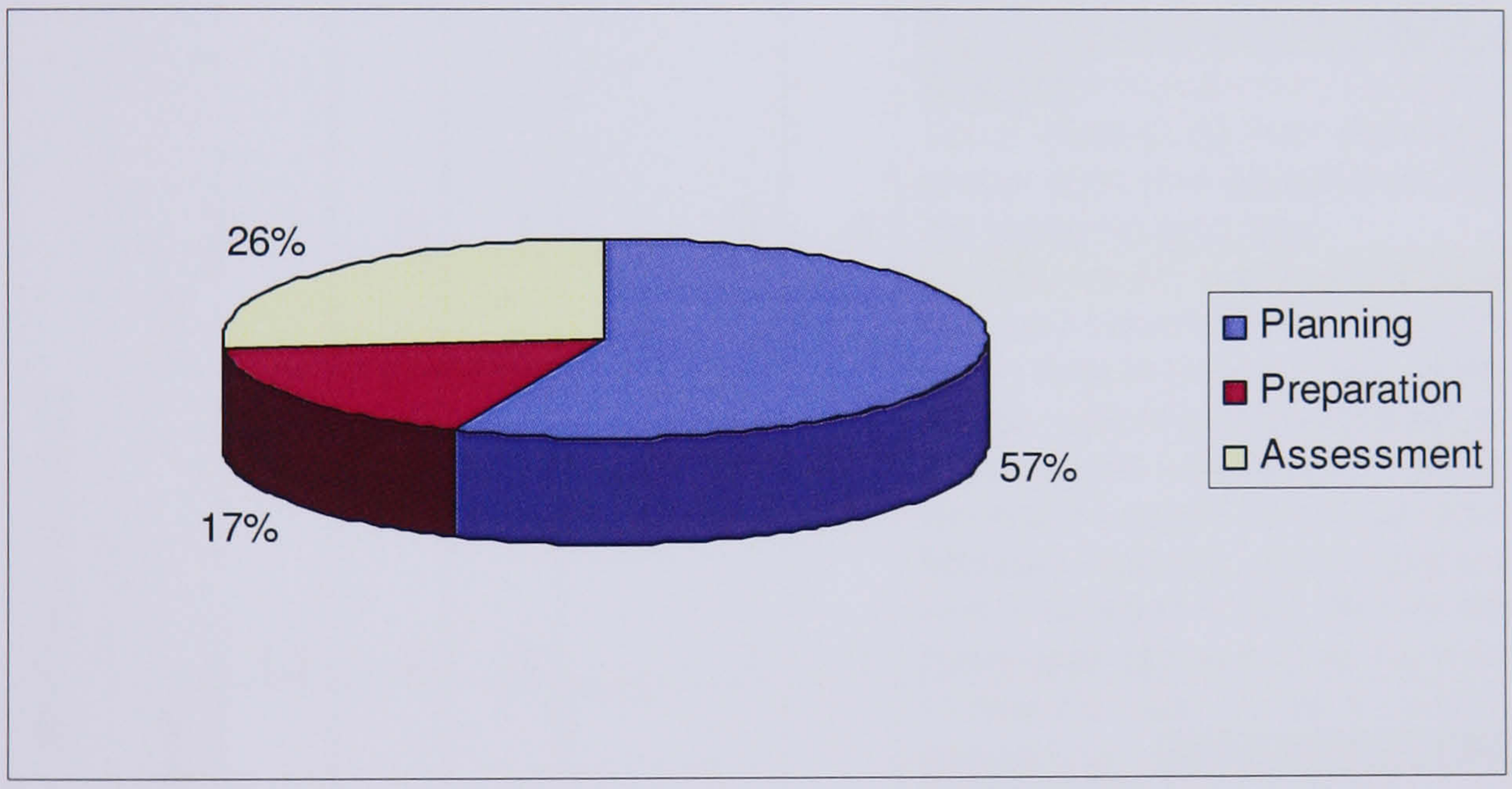


Figure 13-4 Use of PPA time in Term 2

Purely for illustration, these two charts show the overall picture of time use across the six schools and between the two terms.

13.8. Appendix 8

Purpose/outcomes charts

		Outcomes					Perceived purpose of PPA
		1	2	3	4	5	
		sustain improveme	manage change	learning and	teachers' outcomes	other	
Barfields Round 2	2100	1	2	1	2	1	It's to increase work/life balance and to redress those issues, to alleviate stress, so it's to help with the wellbeing of the staff, and it's to raise standards in that teachers can be more focused on their teaching because they have specific time out of class to do their planning, preparation and assessment. So focusing the teaching plan also.
	2101	1.5	3	1	1	1	It improves my quality time at home because I don't have to spend quite so much time in the evenings doing those things – planning, preparation and assessment – because for example, this weekend I saved up all my reports until Monday morning, when I started at 7.30 and finished at 11.45. Before that I would have been doing that at the weekend.
	2102	1	2	1	1	1	I know it's meant to be a combination of everything – planning, preparation and assessment, but I think it's meant to give us more time to do all these. Time to do all the things we normally do in our own time at weekends. So it's about giving us some time back.
	2104	1	1	1	1		I think it's meant to give you release time to be able to reflect on your professional responsibilities and be able to release you from that pupil/teacher contact so you can actually get down to planning effectively and prepare resources effectively.
		Likely outcome					**Mostly 'school' then 'other' then 'teacher'**
		Purpose					**Predominantly to improve work-life balance. Also to improve working.**

Table 13-3 Example of purpose/outcomes analysis (Barfields)

Numbers (e.g. 2100) represent a particular teacher, with the '2' prefix representing second round interviews. Blue highlighting shows an outcome perceived by that teacher to be most likely; red is the outcome that teacher perceived to be least likely. Numbers represent 1 = very likely; 2 = possible; 3 = unlikely. For each school and round, a summary at the bottom of each table was given in terms of 'likely outcome' and 'purpose' after consideration and interpretation of the range of responses. In this example, green and yellow highlighting is used to show why responses were interpreted to suggest PPA's purpose was perceived here as *"predominantly to improve work/life balance"*. It can be seen that teachers 2100 and 2101 discuss work/life balance issues first and foremost. Teacher 2102 begins with talking about working but comes back to the notion of work/life balance saying that this is what *"it's about"*.

13.9. Appendix 9

Interview questions around 'effects' of PPA

The following table shows how interview questions were generated from literature:

Question	Reference
Developing staff / Knowledge, skills, dispositions of staff	
Does PPA develop your skills at teaching?	"Increasing the knowledge and skills of individuals" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA improve the way you work as a school to develop one another?	"Developing the work of the staff as a team" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA develop your skills at assessment?	"Being professionally competent in instruction and assessment" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Does PPA make you expect more from your class?	"Holding high expectations of student learning" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Involving staff, students and the community	
Does PPA give pupils more responsibility (for their learning, routines, decisions)?	"Involving pupils at an organizational level" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help make parents more involvement with the school?	Involvement of / communication with, parents (Hopkins et al., 1994)
'Transformational' leadership	
Does PPA give you more responsibility over decisions?	"Leadership as a style which affects the culture of the school, rather than a series of transactions. Less about control and more about empowering / decentralizing – leadership as a vehicle for supporting / informing staff so they can bring to life the values and priorities of the school" (Hopkins et al., 1994) "School capacity requires effective principal leadership" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Developing activity coordination strategies	
Does PPA help you to co-ordinate with your	"Tighter relationships to emphasize

colleagues so that you can co-operate better?	cooperation / coordination with members striving for mutual benefit and a common purpose" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help you to share ideas and support colleagues more?	"Opportunities to share ideas within the working group" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help formalize communication processes between staff?	"Setting up more formal 'task groups' with clear goals…Sound procedures for communication." (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help you to take a broader view of your work? (perhaps co-ordinating other things, or with other people)	"Developing a broader view of coordinating work in order to develop" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Focusing on enquiry and reflection	
Does PPA help the school to develop its own agenda for improvement?	"The school imposing its own agenda on change: learning to recognize strengths and working with them, not just assuming that all central policies must be implemented from scratch" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help the school to recognize and use the strengths of its staff?	"learning to recognize strengths and working with them" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help the school to monitor improvement and change plans accordingly?	"Routine data collection and scrutiny resulting in planning and action – using data to inform planning processes." (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Collaborative planning	
Does PPA develop school wide aims for student learning?	"A clear, shared purpose for student learning" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
A professional learning community	
Does PPA enable staff to collaborate to achieve those aims?	"Collaboration among staff to achieve the purpose" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Does PPA help you to become more reflective about challenges you face?	"Reflective professional inquiry by the staff to address the challenges they face" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Does PPA give you more opportunities to influence the school's activities and policies?	"Opportunities for staff to influence the school's activities and policies" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Programme coherence	

Does PPA help tie in plans for staff learning and pupil learning to wider school goals?	"Programmes for student and staff learning are focused on clear school goals" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Does PPA help sustain plans for improvement?	"Programmes for student and staff learning are sustained over a period of time" (Newmann et al., 2000)
Technical (and physical) resources	
Does PPA help improve your resources (including the teaching curriculum / the materials you prepare and use to teach / the tools you assess with / the technology you have access to?	High quality curriculum, instruction material and assessment instruments. High quality technology and workspace etc. (Newmann et al., 2000)
Does PPA help improve the financial ability of the school to deliver its objectives?	"Budgetary and financial ability to deliver objectives (initial capital outlay but also operation / maintenance requirements)" (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995)
External support	
Does PPA help the school make better use of people outside of the school?	"Support and commitment of significant outside individuals and groups for the goals" (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995)
Organizational processes	
Does PPA help improve any organizational processes?	"Internal organizational processes / procedures; assignment of accountability; processes through which the entity deals with and grants access to its services to the public" (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995)
Does PPA help you to set targets more carefully?	"Identifying suitable and feasible goals" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help you to put that planning into action?	"Linking planning to action" (Hopkins et al., 1994)
Does PPA help you to assess the results?	"Linking planning to measuring / monitoring, focused on improvement" (Hopkins et al., 1994)

Human resources	
Does PPA motivate you?	"reward and incentive system to ensure motivation" (Ohiorhenuan and Wunker, 1995)

Table 13-4 How research questions on 'effects' were generated

13.10. Appendix 10

Interpreting effects charts

As will be clear from examining the charts showing perceived effects of PPA, a decision as to whether some particular effect was perceived to arise or not was less straightforward. For qualitative research such as this, it was considered critical to interpret the data without reducing it to a simple aggregation or average score which would, for effects where responses varied between the positive and the negative, be meaningless. In order to account for strength of response, therefore, the following table was constructed by assigning a nominal value of ±2 to a 'definite' response, and a nominal value of ±1 to a 'probable' response. The 'definite' responses were given more sway than the 'probables', because it was observed from the qualitative statements that the 'probables' often reflected uncertainty, while there was more commonly a rationale behind the 'definite' answers. Aggregate scores are given, but this is shown in the context of the positive and negative scores that gave rise to the aggregate. Responses used were those relating to 'now', rather than 'future, which was more speculative.

			Developing staff	Involvement	Leadership	Co-ordination	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Programme coherence	Resources	External support	Processes	Human resources
School	1	**Total**	**9**	**-5**	**-3**	**2**	**11**	**-2**	**-5**	**11**	**0**	**1**	**18**	**7**
		+	15	3	1	12	13	1	6	11	6	2	21	7
		-	-6	-8	-4	-10	-2	-3	-11	0	-6	-1	-3	0
	2	**Total**	**19**	**-13**	**-7**	**14**	**22**	**6**	**9**	**8**	**-4**	**3**	**28**	**8**
		+	23	2	1	26	24	6	16	12	8	6	32	9
		-	-4	-15	-8	-12	-2	0	-7	-4	-12	-3	-4	-1
	3	**Total**	**8**	**-7**	**-5**	**26**	**4**	**2**	**10**	**8**	**7**	**1**	**19**	**10**
		+	20	6	1	33	15	5	19	14	14	4	30	10
		-	-12	-13	-6	-7	-11	-3	-9	-6	-7	-3	-11	0
	4	**Total**	**10**	**-19**	**-8**	**25**	**6**	**3**	**-6**	**-3**	**1**	**-1**	**53**	**14**
		+	31	4	1	41	21	8	14	10	14	5	55	14
		-	-21	-23	-9	-16	-15	-5	-20	-13	-13	-6	-2	0
	5	**Total**	**0**	**-5**	**-4**	**-11**	**-9**	**-3**	**-1**	**-1**	**-9**	**-4**	**20**	**4**
		+	9	4	0	5	3	1	8	6	2	2	24	5
		-	9	-9	-4	-16	-12	-4	-9	-7	-11	-6	-4	-1
	6	**Total**	**-10**	**-20**	**-7**	**16**	**-8**	**-4**	**-5**	**-1**	**-8**	**-8**	**12**	**8**
		+	10	0	1	26	10	2	10	9	6	1	22	8
		-	-20	-20	-8	-10	-18	-6	-15	-10	-14	-9	-10	0

Table 13-5 Interpretation of responses concerning effects of PPA

A key to the table and colour coding is given below.

Positive	Responses to the questions reflecting the effect concerned were either all positive, or very clearly positive in the majority.
Negative	Responses to the questions reflecting the effect concerned were either all negative, or very clearly negative in the majority.
Marginally positive	A similar number of responses reflecting the effect concerned were positive, as were negative. School 5, 'developing staff', was a case in point, with an aggregate score of 0. This was interpreted as marginally positive by looking to responses about 'future' effects, which pushed the score up to +13.
Marginally negative	A similar number of responses reflecting the effect concerned were negative, as were positive. School 1, 'resources' was a case in point, with an aggregate score of 0. This was interpreted as marginally negative by looking to responses about 'future' effects, which pushed the score down to -1.

Responses for 'future' effects were used only in marginal cases where aggregate score was 0, for a number of reasons. Firstly, in most cases they closely resembled scores for 'now', and were only required as evidence in marginal cases. Secondly, 'future' tended to be based on speculation rather than perception. Thirdly, where there were significant differences between 'future' and 'now' responses, they related to specific events such as a change in leadership, which would influence aggregate results in a meaningless way. Fourth, it would be inappropriate to mix up the two sets of data across the whole table because it would render the scoring system fairly meaningless.

13.11. Appendix 11

Construction of 'effectiveness' tables

Areas schools needed to focus on for improvement were taken from direct questioning of respondents about how important each of the effects of PPA were in order for their school to improve. At Barfields, for example, the following chart, taken from the Case Study chapter section 4.5.1, shows the importance assigned to each of the 12 capacity themes (operationalised as 'effects'). As shown, seven effects had an average score of 'important' or more.

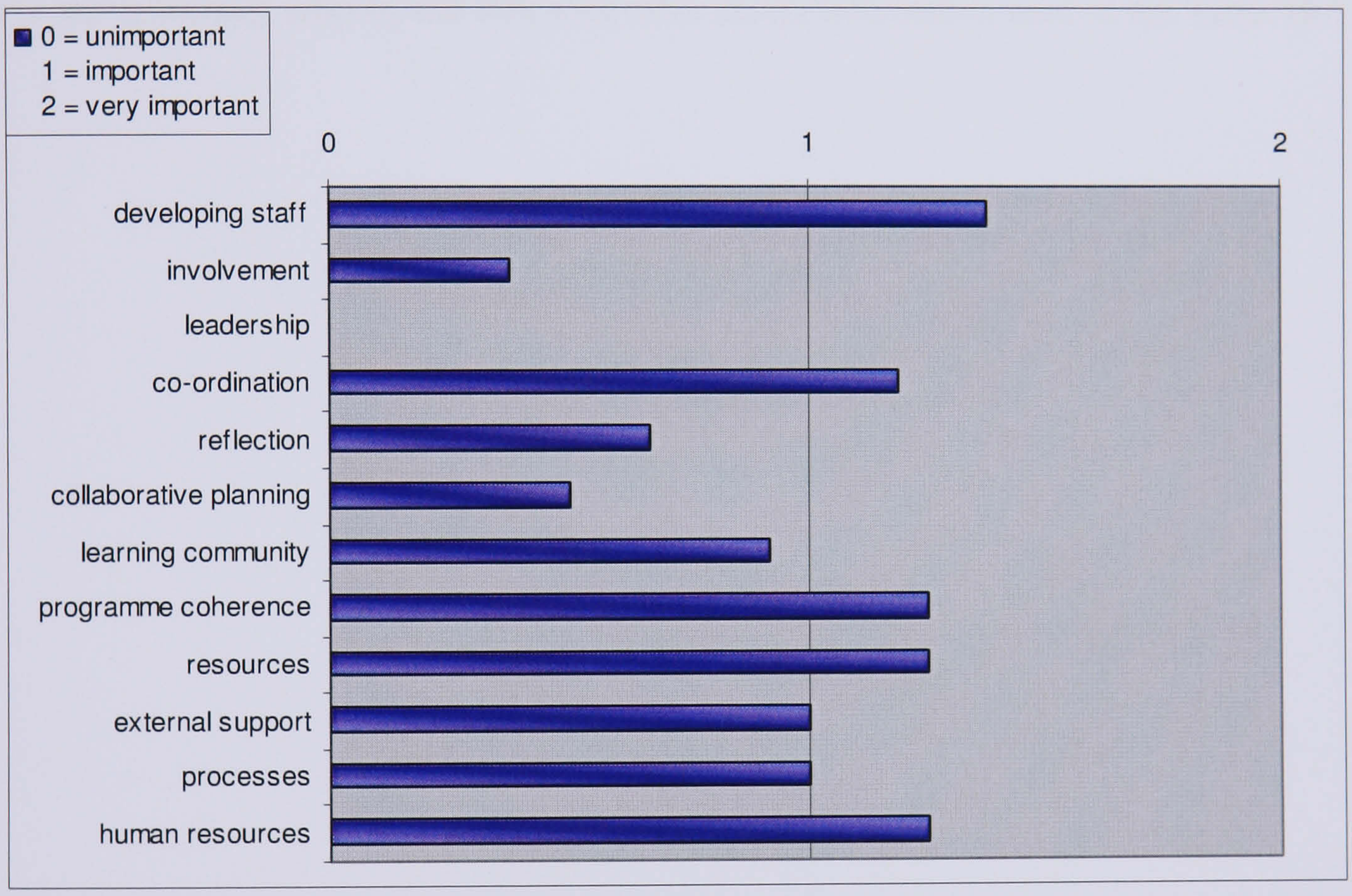


Figure 13-5 Perceived average importance of the 12 'effects' to improvement at Barfields

Comparing this chart with the table in Appendix 10, it can be seen that six effects are considered to (a) be important for improvement, AND (b) to arise from PPA, although only marginally so for two of these. These are indicated by '✓' (or '(✓)' for 'marginally') and are: developing staff, programme coherence, processes, and human resources (coloured blue), and co-ordination and external support (red on blue).

	Developing staff	Involvement	Leadership	Co-ordination	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Programme coherence	Resources	External support	Processes	Human resources
Barfields	✓			(✓)				✓		(✓)	✓	✓

Table 13-6 The six effects considered to (a) be important for improvement and (b) to arise from PPA at Barfields

For the remaining schools, the following table shows information used in the Table 10-7.

School			Developing staff	Involvement	Leadership	Co-ordination	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Programme coherence	Resources	External support	Processes	Human resources
		Relationship to PPA												
		Important	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1	Important AND arises from PPA	✓			(✓)				✓		(✓)	✓	✓
		Relationship to PPA												
		Important	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	Important AND arises from PPA	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
		Relationship to PPA												
		Important	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3	Important AND arises from PPA	✓			✓	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	
		Relationship to PPA												
		Important	✓					✓		✓	✓		✓	
	4	Important AND arises from PPA	✓					✓			(✓)		✓	
		Relationship to PPA												
		Important	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓	
	5	Important AND arises from PPA	(✓)										✓	
		Relationship to PPA												
		Important		✓						✓	✓			
	6	Important AND arises from PPA												
		Total schools considering theme important for improvement	5	4	1	3	2	4	2	6	6	3	5	2

Table 13-7 Information used for determining 'effectiveness' of PPA at each school

13.12. Appendix 12

Tables showing 'influences' on each of the 12 effects

Twelve tables were generated from case study data in order to examine influences on the twelve effects. Each table shows how the 'influences' impact upon one particular effect at each school. The symbol '✓' denotes an 'influence' that was considered to contribute to an effect's occurrence through PPA at a particular school. The symbol '✗' denotes an 'influence' that was considered to hinder a particular effect from arising through PPA at a particular school. Construction of the tables below was an interpretive, iterative, process:

- A series of interview questions was devoted to investigating the 'effects' of PPA (Appendix 9).
- Radnor's (2002) six-stage analysis technique (3.5.4) was carried out on the raw interview data using NVivo.
- The 'Effects' sections (part 5.) of each of the six Case Study chapters examined each of the twelve 'effects' in turn, using an interpretive process to pull out the underlying 'influences' from statements. The 'Effects' section reflects a series of analytical statements about which effects arose and why.
- A Summary table was created in each Case Study chapter (part 5. of the summary sections) to show the relationship between 'effects' and 'influences'.
- Each of the twelve tables below was created with reference to the above Summary tables, as well as by referring back to the analytical statements as a way of cross-checking data. A process of reading and re-reading analytical statements ensued. As the six Case Study chapters were read more closely alongside one another in order to create the tables below, new interpretations of influences arose, and Summary tables were adjusted to reflect a more iterative understanding.

Tables are colour coded as in Table 10-5, with colours representing overall perceptions at each school about whether or not a particular effect arose from PPA. The first table, for example, breaks down the influences upon the effect Developing Staff in order to build up a picture of which were key influences. These influences were taken not from the general influences discussed in the influence chapters of each case study, but from interpreting what is written under each of the headings relating to the 12 themes within each case study. For example, at school 3 section 6.5.2, it can be seen that the following influence themes emerge:

- Staff work collaboratively, which has a positive effect.
- Time is spent collaborating, and assessing, which contribute to the positive effect

- Time is sometimes not spent assessing, which counts against the effect happening
- Expectations of pupils are high anyway, which means PPA is less likely to contribute to this.

This explains why ticks and crosses appear where they do on the table below:

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
External	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Extra time	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
School	CULTURE	✓					
	Openness	✓					
	HISTORY					✓	
	Priorities					✓	
	PUPILS	×		×			×
	High expectations already	×		×			×
	STRUCTURES	✓×	✓	✓	✓×	✓	✓×
	Assessment policy	✓×				✓	
	PPA strategy (collaboration)		✓	✓	✓		✓
	PPA strategy (timing)		✓				
	School organisation				✓×		×
	SUPPORT STAFF						
	Teachers plan for them better	✓					
Teacher	MOTIVATION	✓×					
	SKILLS					✓	
	Of teachers					✓	
	USE OF PPA TIME	✓		✓	✓×	✓	
	Collaborating with others / TAs			✓			
	Coaching	✓					
	Assessment			✓	×	✓	
	Reflection				✓	✓	
	Risk taking				✓		

Table 13-8 'Influences' on the 'effect' Developing Staff

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
External	POLICY DETAILS	✓					
	Extra time	✓					
School	HISTORY				×	×	
	Priorities				×	×	
	PUPILS	×		×			×
	Good home relations	×		×			×
Tea.	USE OF PPA TIME	✓×	×	×	✓×		
	Feedback	✓×	×	×	✓×		
	Assessment	×					

Table 13-9 'Influences' on the 'effect' Involvement

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ex.	POLICY DETAILS	✓					
	Extra time	✓					
School	HISTORY	×					
	Size	×					
	LEADERSHIP			×			×
	Senior management style			×			×
	STRUCTURES		✓×	✓	✓		
	PPA strategy (collaboration)		✓×	✓	✓		
Teacher	MOTIVATION	×					
	EXPERIENCE (ROLE)	×		×	×		×
	Role limits perceived effects	×		×	×		×
	USE OF PPA TIME	✓				✓	
	Assessment	✓				✓	

Table 13-10 'Influences' on the 'effect' Leadership

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
External	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	In the working day				✓		✓
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Regular				✓		✓
School	CULTURE		✓			×	
	Open					×	
	Positive		✓				
	HISTORY		×			×	✓
	Size		×			×	✓
	STRUCTURES		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Accommodation		✓				
	PPA strategy (timing)		✓				
	PPA strategy (collaboration)			✓	✓		✓
	PPA strategy (contract extension)					✓	
Teacher	ROLE	×					
	Role limits perceived effects	×					
	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Collaborating with others / TAs			✓		✓	✓
	Coaching		✓				
	Subject area monitoring		✓				
	Resource planning	✓					
	Assessment	✓					
	Reflection						✓
	Reviewing planning	✓					
	Research	✓					

Table 13-11 'Influences' on the 'effect' Co-ordination

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ex.	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
School	CULTURE	×					
	Utilising strengths of all staff	×					
	HISTORY		×				×
	Size		×				
	Established staff						×
	STRUCTURES	✓	✓	✓×	✓×	×	✓×
	PPA strategy (cover)			✓	✓		✓
	PPA strategy (collaboration)		✓	✓	✓		
	PPA strategy (limited collaboration)			×	×		
	PPA strategy (with TAs)				✓		
	PPA strategy (lessons covered)	✓					
	School organisation			×	×	×	×
	SUPPORT STAFF	✓	✓		✓		
	Working alongside cover	✓	✓		✓		
	RELATIONSHIPS						×
	Already positive						×
Teacher	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓		×	✓×	✓
	Subject area monitoring	✓	✓				
	Meeting staff meeting targets	✓	✓				
	Assessment	✓			×		✓
	Reviewing planning					✓×	
	EXPERIENCE (ROLE)	✓	✓				
	Helps leadership role	✓	✓				

Table 13-12 'Influences' on the 'effect' Reflection

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ex.	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Sch.	STRUCTURES			✓×		×	✓×
	PPA strategy (collaboration)			✓×			✓
	School organisation					×	×
Tea.	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Meeting staff meeting targets	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Research	✓					

Table 13-13 'Influences' on the 'effect' Collaborative planning

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ext.	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓			
	In the working day		✓				
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓			
School	CULTURE				×		
	Open				×		
	STRUCTURES		✓	✓	✓×	✓×	×
	PPA strategy (collaboration)		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	PPA strategy (limited collaboration)				×		×
	School organisation					×	×
Teacher	EXPERIENCE (ROLE)	×			×	✓	
	Role limits perceived effects	×					
	Subject area monitoring					✓	
	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Coaching			✓			
	Reflection	✓	✓		✓		✓

Table 13-14 'Influences' on the 'effect' Learning community

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
External	POLITICAL					✓×	✓×
	Political will					✓×	✓×
	EXTERNAL PRESSURE			✓	✓		
	Union pressure			✓	✓		
	POLICY DETAILS	✓×	✓×	✓			✓×
	Extra time	✓		✓			✓
	Regular			✓			
	Funding		×				×
	Statutory	✓	✓				
School	HISTORY		×				×
	Finances		×				×
	LEADERSHIP						✓×
	Change in leadership						✓×
	STRUCTURES		✓×	✓	×	✓	✓
	PPA strategy (cover)		✓×		×		
	PPA strategy (collaboration)			✓			✓
	PPA strategy (timing)					✓	
	School organisation				×		
	SUPPORT STAFF		✓				
	Sustainability as cover		✓				
Teacher	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓	×		✓
	Collaborating with others / TAs			✓			
	Coaching			✓			
	Meeting staff meeting targets			✓			
	Specific subject planning				×		✓
	SKILLS					×	
	Of teachers					×	

Table 13-15 'Influences' on the 'effect' Programme coherence

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
External	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓×	✓×	✓×	×	✓×
	In the working day				✓		
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Funding		×	×	×	×	×
School	HISTORY	×			×		
	Size	×					
	Finances	×			×		
	PUPILS	×					
	Special Educational Needs	×					
	STRUCTURES		×	✓	✓		
	PPA strategy (cover)		×	✓			
	PPA strategy (with TAs)				✓		
Teacher	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓×	✓
	Resource planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓×	✓
	SKILLS					×	
	Professionalism					×	

Table 13-16 'Influences' on the 'effect' Resources

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ext.	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	In the working day		✓				
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
School	CULTURE					×	
	Community oriented					×	
	HISTORY		×				
	Finances		×				
Tea.	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓	✓×		✓×
	Contacting outsiders	✓	✓	✓	✓×		✓×
	Specific subject planning		✓				

Table 13-17 'Influences' on the 'effect' External support

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ext.	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	In the working day			✓			
	Extra time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
School	HISTORY	×				×	
	Size	×					
	Priorities					×	
	STRUCTURES	×		✓	✓		✓
	PPA strategy (collaboration)			✓	✓		✓
	Staff meetings	×					
Teacher	USE OF PPA TIME	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Collaborating with others / TAs						✓
	Specific subject planning		✓			✓	✓
	Assessment	✓		✓		✓	
	Reflection	✓		✓			
	Target setting					✓	
	Risk taking				✓		
	EXPERIENCE (ROLE)		✓×	×			
	Role limits perceived effects	×	×	×			
	Helps leadership role		✓				

Table 13-18 'Influences' on the 'effect' Processes

		Barfields	Hall Gdn	Meadows	Orchard	Undrwd	Westflds
Ex.	POLICY DETAILS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	In the working day			✓	✓		✓
	Extra time	✓			✓		
	Sense of valuing teachers		✓	✓	✓	✓	
School	STRUCTURES		×	✓	✓	×	
	PPA strategy (collaboration)			✓	✓		
	PPA strategy (contract extension)					×	
	PPA strategy (cover)		×				
	PPA strategy (timing)		×				

Table 13-19 'Influences' on the 'effect' Human resources

13.13. Appendix 13

Association of each effect with PPA by school

The table below is constructed from the twelve tables given in Appendix 12 and summarises how respondents associated the twelve 'effects' with PPA. Schools are ordered from most to least positive in terms of the number of effects they perceived to arise, or not arise, from PPA. A key is given below the table.

	Association with PPA	Number of 'effects'											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hall Gdns	positive												
	marginally positive												
	marginally negative												
	negative												
Meadows	positive												
	marginally positive												
	marginally negative												
	negative												
Orchard	positive												
	marginally positive												
	marginally negative												
	negative												
Barfields	positive												
	marginally positive												
	marginally negative												
	negative												
Underwd	positive												
	marginally positive												
	marginally negative												
	negative												
Westfield	positive												
	marginally positive												
	marginally negative												
	negative												

Table 13-20 Number of effects perceived to arise from PPA at each school

Positive	PPA was perceived to give rise to this effect
Negative	PPA was not perceived to give rise to this effect
Marginally positive	PPA was perceived to give rise to this effect; but only marginally so
Marginally negative	PPA was not perceived to give rise to this effect; only marginally so

Table 13-21 Key to colour coding

13.14. Appendix 14

Comparison of general influences and effect affecting influences

Influence tables (Table 10-2 - Table 10-4) and Effects tables (Table 13-8 - Table 13-19) were compared, by copying and pasting into Excel, to show whether the influences affecting the 12 effects of PPA were the only influences, or whether more were mentioned by teachers and headteachers in interview. The comparison table is given below. Ticks in the right hand column represent influences that were said to be pertinent (could be qualifiers, enablers, or inhibitors) in one or more of the schools. Ticks in the column next to it represent influences that were shown to be pertinent at one or more of the schools *by specifically affecting* one or more of the 12 effects of PPA. Yellow highlighting indicates an influence that was not perceived significant at the level of the 12 effects. Green highlighting indicates an influence that was mentioned *only* in terms of the 12 effects.

	Theme	Sub-theme	This influence affected one or more of the 12 effects of PPA	This influence was pertinent to one or more of the schools
External	community	source of cover		✓
	political action / tone	support		✓
		funding		✓
		extended schools agenda		✓
		political will / legislation	✓	✓
	inherent policy	extra time	✓	✓
		in the working day	✓	✓
		regular	✓	✓
		delivery of training		✓
		funding	✓	✓
		statutory	✓	✓
		non-directive role of headteacher		✓
		sense of valuing teachers	✓	✓
	professional learning			✓
	external pressure	unions	✓	✓
	External support	Local authority		✓
School	culture	openness	✓	✓
		positive	✓	✓
		community oriented		✓
		co-operative		✓
		provisional trust		✓
		utilising strengths of staff	✓	
	history	priorities	✓	✓
		size	✓	✓
		established staff	✓	
		finances	✓	✓
		part time staff		✓
		improvement		✓
		turbulence		✓

	mix of pupils	high expectations anyway	✓	
		good home relations	✓	
		SEN	✓	✓
		positive behaviour/attitudes		✓
		problem children		✓
		cohort		✓
	leadership	senior management style	✓	
		change in leadership	✓	✓
		Attitude towards PPA		✓
		Influence over activities		✓
		Efficient organisation		✓
		Vision		✓
		Communication of vision		✓
	structures	assessment policy	✓	✓
		accommodation	✓	✓
		staff meetings	✓	✓
		school organisation	✓	✓
		PPA strategy (cover)	✓	✓
		PPA strategy (collaboration)	✓	✓
		PPA strategy (limited collaboration)	✓	
		PPA strategy (timing)	✓	✓
		PPA strategy (contract extension)	✓	✓
		PPA strategy (with TAs)	✓	✓
		PPA strategy (lessons covered)	✓	
		development of TAs		✓
	support staff	skills		✓
		teachers can plan better for them	✓	✓
		provided a solution		✓
		sustainable	✓	✓
		familiar with pupils		✓
		lack of willingness		✓
		working alongside cover	✓	
	relationships			✓
		already positive	✓	
	morale			✓
	power issues			✓
Teacher	beliefs	skills of TAs		✓
		developing TAs		✓
		who should take a class		✓
	skills	Of cover teacher		✓
		Of teachers	✓	✓
		Skill gap		✓
		Flexibility		✓
		Organisation		✓
		professionalism	✓	
	motivation		✓	✓
	experience (role)	Role limits perceived effects	✓	✓
		Leadership role impinges		✓
		Helps leadership role	✓	✓
		Mentoring		✓
		Learning from own/others' experience	✓	✓
	commitment			✓
	confidence			✓
	emotional well-being			✓
	interdependence			✓
	use of PPA time	Collaborating with others / TAs	✓	✓
		Coaching	✓	✓
		Assessment	✓	✓
		Reflection	✓	✓
		Risk taking	✓	✓
		Subject area monitoring	✓	✓

		Resource planning	✓	✓
		Reviewing planning	✓	✓
		Research	✓	
		Meeting staff meeting targets	✓	✓
		Specific subject planning	✓	✓
		Contacting outsiders	✓	✓
		Target setting	✓	
		Feedback	✓	✓

Table 13-22 Comparison of general influences, and influences affecting 'effects'

In order to write the discussion section 11.2.2, any influence highlighted in yellow is cross referenced to the cross case influence tables (Table 10-2, Table 10-3, Table 10-4) where it can be seen whether it was a qualifier etc. In order to create a more meaningful discussion, these influences are then narrowed to those common to two or more cases. In order to write discussion section 11.2.3, any influence not highlighted in yellow is cross referenced to the cross case influence tables (Table 10-2, Table 10-3, Table 10-4), and then to the tables in Appendix 12 to see which schools it was seen to be an influence at. The reason for the two columns indicating whether or not influences are present is that in order to examine the sorts of contextual influences potentially affecting capacity building, 'influences' are examined in two ways. Stoll's framework of influences are related to (1) the implementation of PPA; and (2) the effects of PPA.

Relating to the first; beginning with Stoll's initial theoretical 'influence' framework, all interview data is examined, interpreted, and coded in light of this framework. References to Stoll's' influence themes, or to emergent sub-themes are coded to 'influence nodes' in NVivo, which are then examined under structured 'influence' sections within each case study chapter to examine the key contextual variables in this study. Data relating to influences tends to emerge from specific parts of the interviews: some references to influences emerge as headteachers are asked questions (a) directly relating to the significance of each of Stoll's influences, and (b) about the contextual variables specific to their own schools that affect both implementation and perceived 'success' of PPA. The outcome of this process is a series of themes, within each chapter's influence section, perceived to influence PPA's implementation and success. The word 'success' is used here in a general sense to distinguish between the positive things arising from PPA (that teachers and headteachers see and describe in everyday language), and the 'effects' of PPA that theory relates to capacity building, and that interviews go on to discuss.

In relation to the second; influences are also examined in the light of the 12 capacity themes. Questions are asked about PPA's contribution to each of these, which are discussed in terms

of 12 'effects' (see Appendix 9). Data is interpreted, coded, and analysed in order to draw out the influences affecting perceptions of the twelve effects.

Through interpretation of interview data relating to the twelve capacity themes, this study is able to pinpoint the particular 'influences' and their sub-themes that affect whether or not the 12 capacity related 'effects' arise from PPA in each school. These are shown in full detail in the series of tables in Appendix 12. These are not reduced to a summary at this stage because reducing this information further would render it meaningless. Of the many influences shown in the table above it can be seen that the two lists are very similar in terms of the themes and sub-themes generated. The list relating to point 1. above is the longer, however, because a number of the influences interviewees associate with the positive implementation and successful outcomes of PPA are *not* given as influences on the 12 effects (and hence, this latter is the shorter list). These are highlighted yellow. Green highlighting indicates influences that are mentioned *only* in terms of the 12 effects. The fact that these gaps exist gives confidence in the analysis process and integrity of this study because it shows the close fit achieved between the two sets of influences without 'forcing' influences to fit into a neat pattern. The fact that there are two sets of influences is a pivotal finding of this study, as detailed in the discussion chapter. At first, it appeared to yield a number of alternative and conflicting possible explanations, whose assumptions are discussed in the following series of bullet points:

- Stoll's influences are not all significant for capacity building because the interpretation process examining the 12 themes did not find Stoll's influence themes 'Community' and 'Political action/tone' as being at all influential. This explanation would be based on the premise that only influences relating to the 12 'themes' studied affect capacity building, which cannot be assumed true. Although this study does not raise alternative themes, this does not preclude their existence.
- The 12 themes are not sufficient indicators of capacity because there are influences shown to be significant by this study that are not said to impact upon them. This explanation assumes that these additional influences did not impact upon the 12 themes simply because they were not said to. It may be that these influences did bear influence in some way, but that respondents simply had not considered these possibilities.
- Following on from the last point: the interpretation process drew insufficient evidence. Influences that are discussed in terms of the 12 themes should also arise in the more general discussions of factors that influence implementation and successful outcomes of PPA. This explanation would be based on the assumption that if

questioned at sufficient length, the collective group of interviewees would eventually mention all possible influences.

- Taking a different stance on the last point: the interpretation process drew sufficient evidence, bringing to light all these additional influences that questioning about the 12 effects alone would not have, however long teachers took to consider their answers. It may be that 'external' influences, for example, are discussed less readily in relation to the 12 effects simply because respondents do not consider these as readily as they consider effects 'closer to home' (i.e. at school level). When discussing general influences on implementation and success of PPA time, respondents were more ready to bring in external influences because these were mentioned in the questioning process.
- The explanation considered to hold most relevance and truth value by this study involves the existence of both 'direct' and 'indirect' influences, however, as detailed in the discussion chapter. The points above serve to illustrate the thought process generated by the finding.

13.15. Appendix 15

Cross referencing of effects tables for PPA activities

This table was constructed by cross referencing the Cross Case 'effects' tables (Appendix 12) with one another. The two symbols ✓✗ denote whether uses of time were 'enablers' or 'inhibitors' of the effect, respectively.

USE OF TIME	Developing staff	Involvement	Leadership	Co-ordination	Reflection	Collaborative planning	Learning community	Programme coherence	Resources	External support	Processes
Collaborating with others / TAs	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓
Coaching	✓			✓			✓	✓			
Feedback		✓✓ ✗✗ ✗									
Subject area monitoring				✓	✓ ✓			✓✗			
Meeting staff meeting targets					✓ ✓	✓✓✓ ✓		✓			
Resource planning				✓					✗✗ ✓✓ ✓✓		
Contacting outsiders										✓✓ ✓✓ ✗✗	
Specific subject planning								✓✓		✓	✓ ✓ ✓
Assessment	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✗			✓✓			✓ ✓ ✓
Risk taking											✓
Reflection				✓			✓✓ ✓✓				✓ ✓

Reviewing planning				✓	×						
Research				✓		✓					
Target setting											✓

Table 13-23 Cross referencing PPA activities with 'effects' they related to

Ranking of activities in order of importance depended upon the number of 'effects' each influenced, and whether they were enabling or inhibiting influences.

USE OF TIME	affects	Enables	Inhibits
Collaborating with others / TAs	5	5	
Coaching	4	4	
Feedback	1	2	3
Subject area monitoring	3	4	1
Meeting staff meeting targets	3	7	
Resource planning	2	5	2
Contacting outsiders	1	4	2
Specific subject planning	3	6	
Assessment	7	11	1
Risk taking	1	1	
Reflection	3	7	
Reviewing planning	2	1	1
Research	2	2	
Target setting	1	1	

Table 13-24 Ranking activities in order of influence on 'effects'

13.16. Appendix 16

Summary of all influences found by this study

Table 10-2, Table 10-3, and Table 10-4 (cross case analysis) break down influences into themes and sub-themes, indicating which schools each sub-theme is significant for. These are amalgamated and shown in Table 13-25. The range of sub-themes is a contribution in its own right because it adds empirically to Stoll's (1999) framework. The full range of influences is shown, with emergent themes highlighted. As brought to light already in section 11.1, a number of influences emerge only in light of the 'effects' of PPA. These are highlighted in green and assigned as an 'enabler' or 'inhibitor' according to whether there are ticks or crosses in the appropriate place in each of the 12 cross case effects tables in Appendix 12.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES AND SUB-THEMES		Qualifier	Enabler	Inhibitor
Community		**4, (6)**	**(6)**	**(3)**
	Source of cover	4, (6)	1, (6)	3
Political action/tone		**1, 3, 5**	**4, 6**	**2, (6)**
	Funding	1		2
	Extended Schools Agenda		4	
	Political will / legislation	3, 5	6	(6)
Inherent policy details		**1, 4**	**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**	**4, 5, 6**
	In the working day		1, 2, 3, 6	
	Extra time		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
	Regular		3	
	Delivery of training			(4)
	Funding			4, 5, 6
	Statutory	1, 4		
	Non-directive role of Head			5
	Sense of valuing teachers		2, 3, 4, 5	
Professional learning infrastructure		**1**		
External pressure		**4**		
	Unions	4		
External support			**1**	
	Local Authority		1	

SCHOOL INFLUENCES AND SUB-THEMES				
Culture		**4, 6**	**1, 2, 3**	**5, (6)**
	Openness	4	1	5
	Positive		2, 3	5, (6)
	Community oriented			5
	Co-operative	5		
	Provisional trust	6		
	Utilising strengths of staff			1
History		**3,**	**2, 5, 6**	**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**
	Size	3	6	1, 2, 3, 5
	Part time staff			1
	Improvement		2	6,
	Finances	3		2, 4, 5, 6
	Turbulence			(5)
	Priorities		5	5
	Established staff			6
Mix of pupils		**1, 4, 5, 6**	**3**	**1, 2**
	Positive attitudes / behaviour	1, 5, 6	3	
	High proportion SEN			1
	Problem children			2
	Cohort	4		
	Good home relations			1, 3, 6
	High expectations anyway			1, 3, 6
Leadership		**3, 6**	**1,2,3,4,5**	**(6)**
	Attitude towards PPA		1	
	Influence over activities		2, 3, 5	
	Efficient organisation	3, 6		
	Vision		1, 4, 5	
	Communication of vision	(6)	4, 5	(6)
	Change in leadership	(6)		(6)
	Senior management style			3, 6
Structures		**1, 2**	**1,2,3,4,5,6**	**1,2,3,4,5,6**
	Accommodation		2	1, 3, (4), 6
	Assessment policy	1		
	PPA strategy (cover)	2	1, 3, 4, 5	(4)
	PPA strategy (collaboration)		2, 3, 4, (5), 6	(4)
	PPA strategy (contract extension)			5
	PPA strategy (with TAs)		4	
	PPA strategy (limited collaboration)			3, 4, 6
	PPA strategy (lessons covered)		1	
	Timing of PPA	2		2
	Development of TAs		4	
	Staff meetings		5	1
	School organisation		3, 6	

Power issues		**1, 6**		(6)
Morale		**1, 3, 6**	**2**	
Relationships		**3, 6**	**1, 2, 5**	
	Already positive			6
Support staff		**2, 5, 6**	**1, 3, 4, 6**	**5, 6**
	Skills		3, 4	6
	Teachers can plan for them better		1	
	Provided a solution	5, 6		
	Sustainable	2	4, 6	
	Familiar with pupils	2		
	Lack of willingness			5, 6
	Working alongside cover		1, 2, 4	
TEACHER INFLUENCES AND SUB-THEMES				
Beliefs		**1, 3, 4**		
	Skills of TAs	3, 4		
	Developing TAs	4		
	Who should take a class	1		
Commitment		**1**	**2**	
Confidence		**1**		
Emotional well-being		**1, 6**		
Motivation		**1**	**3, 6**	
Interdependence			**5**	**1**
Skills		**1, 4**	**2, 4, 5**	
	Of cover teacher	1	5	
	Of teachers	1, 5		
	Skill gap		2	
	Flexibility		4	
	Organisation	4		
	Professionalism			5
Experience (role)		**4**	**2, 3, 4, 6**	**1, 2, 3**
	Role limits perceived effects			1, 2, 3
	Leadership role impinges			2
	Helps leadership role		2, 4	
	Mentoring		3, 6	
	Learning from own/others' experience	4	3	
Use of PPA time			**1,2,3,4,5,6**	**(4)**
	Collaborating with others / TAs		2, 3, 4, 6	(4)
	Coaching		1, 2, 3	
	Feedback		1, 2, 4	
	Subject area monitoring		1, 2, 5	
	Meeting staff meeting targets		1, 2, 4	
	Resource planning		1, 4	
	Contacting outsiders		1, 4, 6	6
	Specific subject planning		3, 4, 5, 6	
	Assessment		3, 4, 5, 6	(4)
	Risk taking		4	
	Reflection		4, 5, 6	
	Reviewing planning		3, 5	
	Research		1	
	Target setting		5	

Table 13-25 Summary table of all influences found by this study

13.17. Appendix 17

Analysis for 'higher order' influences

INFLUENCE		Affected by	Q	E	I
EXTERNAL INFLUENCES					
Political action/tone					
	Funding	History (size); pupils	1		
	Funding	History (size)			2
SCHOOL INFLUENCES					
Culture					
	Positive / open	History (size)			5
History					
	Size	Mix of pupils			2
	Improvement	Leadership		2	
	Turbulence	Leadership			(5)
	Priorities	Leadership		5	5
Mix of pupils					
	High proportion SEN	History (size)			1
	Positive attitudes / behaviour	Leadership		3	
Structures					
	PPA strategy (collaboration)	History (size)		6	
	PPA strategy (collaboration)	Leadership		3	
	PPA strategy (collaboration)	History (size)		4	(4)
	PPA strategy (cover)	Funding, mix of pupils	2		
	PPA strategy (cover)	Leadership, Support staff		3	
	PPA strategy (cover)	Leadership		5	
	PPA strategy (contract extension)	Leadership			5
	Development of TAs	Funding		4	
	Staff meetings	Leadership		5	
Morale		History		2	
		History (OfSTED)	6		
Support staff					
	Sustainable	Funding, mix of pupils	2		
Relationships		History (size)		5	
TEACHER INFLUENCES					
Use of PPA time					
	Coaching	Leadership		1	
	Assessment	Leadership		5	
	Collaborating with others / TAs	Leadership, Structures (PPA strategy)		4	(4)
Commitment		Leadership		2	
Skills					
	Skill gap	History		2	
Beliefs					
	Skills of TAs	Leadership	3,4		
	Developing TAs	Leadership	4		

Table 13-26 Analysis of higher order influences

To facilitate discussion of those influences that were more significant than others because of their influence on other influences, summary tables at the end of each case study section on influences were merged into the table shown here, with school numbers shown instead of ticks. This table was then cross-referenced with Appendix 14 and with cross case influence tables (Table 10-2, Table 10-3, Table 10-4) and influences were highlighted according to the criteria (a) influences related to more than one case; and (b) related to the effects of PPA / related to the implementation of PPA.

13.18. Appendix 18

Validation of case studies

Barfields (by email)

Sent: 15 December 2006 11:16

Dear Ellen

I am in receipt of your report on PPA time in my school. I have made the report available to all the teaching staff and so will not require any further copies thank you.

I found the report most incisive and fair. Time has moved on and PPA is now an established part of our school processes. The use of PPA time is still evolving here but is already much more concerned with standards as well as work life balance.

Thank you for your time

Kind regards, [Anna]

Hall Garden (by email)

Sent: 19 March 2007 07:22

Dear Ellen

School has been its normal `manic' self over the last couple of months, hence the reason for my delay in replying.

It was really interesting to read your report, to see how PPA time was perceived by staff and to `second guess' who made which replies to your questions.

I think that your report is a very fair one and truly reflects the nature of our school and the effects that the introduction of PPA had at the time. PPA has been `evolutionary', as I am sure it has been in many schools and staff have learned to use it better. In fact, they now plan for PPA time instead of it just being there for them to use. We also have fewer times when PPA does not happen (usually sickness of cover teacher) and time is 'banked'. TA's are valued more highly and since a case of necessary TA cover during an unexpected absence, their role in support has taken on a growing importance.

Like all schools, we have moved on further since your report was completed. By the end of next term, all the staff interviewees with the exception of [one other] and myself will have left. [One] is now Assistant Head at Nunnery Wood, [another] works at Westlands in Droitwich, [a third] never

came back after a hospital operation and [a fourth] is retiring in July.

We still have what I believe to be a sustainable PPA coverage at [Hall Garden]. All PPA time except for Friday pm, is now covered by teachers, i.e. Music & ICT. Golden time has disappeared and TAs now use the last hour on Friday for a handwriting, storytime session. The stakes have been raised so that only the best two from each class now have a Head Teacher's Star Award, where they come to see me for tea, cakes, certificates, rewards, and a `Special Award' trophy is awarded for the
week.

Hope this helps, have to go to work.

Very best wishes,
[Dave]

THE MARLPOOL FIRST SCHOOL

Marlpool Lane,
Kidderminster.
DY11 5HP

Ms. E. Hodgkinson

18.12.06

Dear Ms. Hodgkinson,

I read with great interest your PPA Time Research Report regarding our school. The report is an accurate reflection of our school - I recognised it instantly!

It was particularly interesting to read how the school's leadership and governance believe the school conditions to be better than how the staff perceive them - there's a lesson in there for me to heed! However, the report had many positive findings and I'm pleased to read that staff see PPA as having a positive impact on so many aspects of school life. It seems the current organisation of PPA fits well in our school and staff generally like how it works.

The report is not only interesting, but is also useful. There are aspects of your analyses which are most useful for the school's leaders; the time given to help you with your research has proved beneficial to us too.

Thank you for my copy of the report, it is always interesting to see where researchers take the evidence they collect from schools. It is reassuring to read that the information collected has been represented so accurately and fairly.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah P

Sarah P
Headteacher

(Headteacher on secondment)

The Orchard (by email and verbal)

Sent: 24 January 2007 15:31

Dear Ellen

Many thanks for your full and detailed report on your findings on PPA time. I consider the report to be a true and fair reflection of staff's views at the time the report was conducted. The graphs and data presented appear to be an accurate summary of the views and feelings of those who were party to your research.

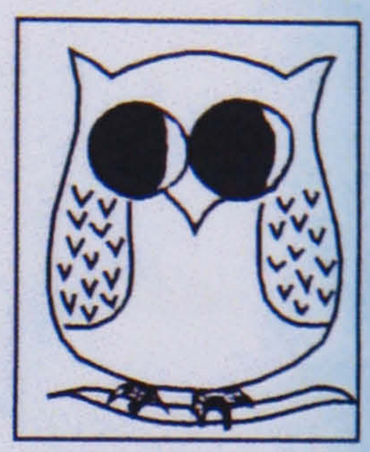
Many thanks for you time and efforts in conducting this research

Yours sincerely
[James Smith]
Head
[The Orchard] Primary School

"The report is very good, very thorough and a fair reflection of where the school is at with PPA. It's reinforced PPA in a positive light, showing all the effects it has on teachers on their working lives. I fed back the summary findings to teachers in a staff meeting and a told them it would be available if they wanted it. A couple have come to me and asked for a copy." (Tanya, Deputy Head)

LEADING ASPECT AWARD

Worcestershire County Council
C of E First School



Worcestershire
Tel / Fax 01905
Email: head@ .worcs.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr

"A Journey of Learning and Discovery"

2003 school achievement award
department for education and skills

Dear Ellen,

Thank you for your report and the time you have spent researching and compiling it. It has been a pleasure to work with you.

Healthy Schools

The report clearly demonstrates the depth of thought and amount of research you put into its construction and I found it both readable and accessible as a document. I also feel it is an accurate reflection of the school's current position with regard to PPA time and its implementation. In addition, it will assist with our ongoing process of self-review at a strategic management level.

My thanks again.

Yours sincerely,

A

The FA
Standard Charter Schools

Mr
Head Teacher

SPORT ENGLAND
ACTIVEMARK

Westfields

Ellen Hodgkinson
PPA Research

13.12.06

Dear Ellen

Ref Research Document into PPA in schools 2005 / 2006

Thank you for my copy of the findings that you have collated regarding PPA at [Westfields]First School.

I found reading the report very interesting and it made the time we spent very worthwhile. It certainly reflects the time and effort that you have given to the project both in schools and at home.

I particularly like the way that you have used a number of personal comments to back up the judgements you have made, and the way in which the data is displayed. The use of "qualifiers, inhibitors" etc was a very clear way of analysing responses.

I believe that your judgements and the whole study provide an accurate picture of the developing process at our school. I also like the way in which it portrays the school as a team of people who are striving to improve the education provided for the children in their care.

Unfortunately, the issue of funding seems to have surfaced frequently and not just from me. I hadn't realised how much I must have mentioned that particular issue to you and to the staff. However, it will remain an issue in Worcestershire while funding is so much lower that elsewhere. (Not my problem any more!)

The new Head Teacher has already taken on some teaching for PPA release and I anticipate that it will provide her with a very good insight into the school; standards, achievement, routines and backgrounds of both staff and children.

Congratulations on a very accurate and comprehensive evaluation of PPA at our school.

[James]